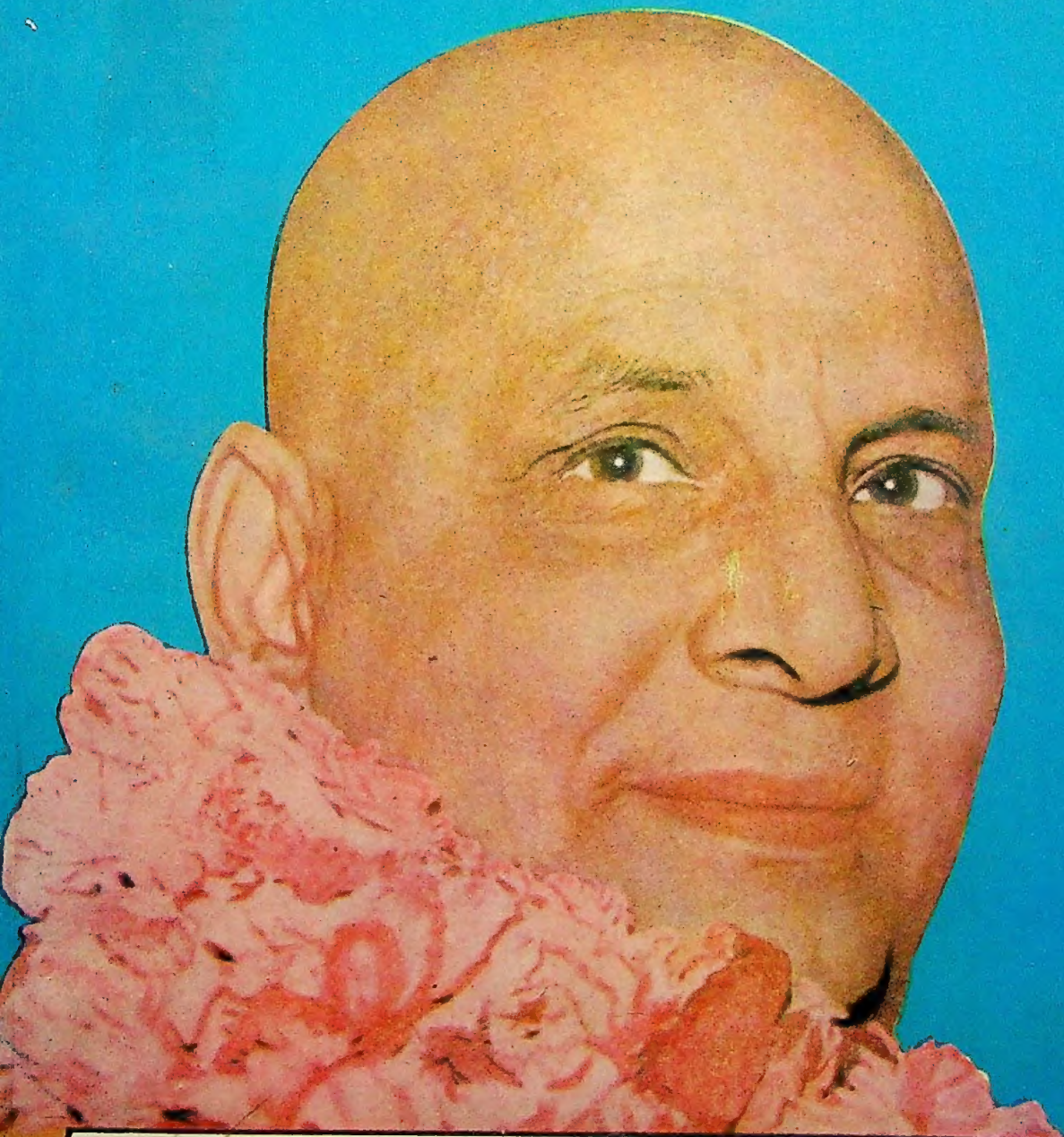


# THE MASTER HIS MISSION AND HIS WORKS



SWAMI SIVANANDA BIRTH CENTENARY  
COMMEMORATION VOLUME











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COMMEMORATION VOLUME



*Published By*

THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY

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# Publishers' Preface

One of the essential projects in the celebration of the Centenary of Worshipful Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj is the dissemination of spiritual knowledge, under which scheme a large number of original writings of Sri Gurudev have been reprinted. Many of his works have been published in several regional languages of India, and some in foreign languages also. The Divine Life Society has endeavoured to spread the message of the Master among all people in as many ways as possible, through a variety of literature, most of which was distributed free to everyone. A continuous period of discourses and teachings at the Headquarters of the Society in the year 1987 also added to the vigorous attempt of the Society to make available the higher knowledge of life to all seekers, touching upon different methods of approach to the life spiritual.

One of the resolutions of the Central Committee formed for conducting the Celebrations was to bring out a Comprehensive Souvenir on the occasion, which would serve as a memento and a permanent guide-book to spiritual seekers the world over. The work of compiling and editing the English language Souvenir was entrusted to Sri N.V. Karthikeyan, Joint Secretary of the Central Committee, who took up this assignment in right earnest, putting his

heart and soul into it, and devoting his entire time for the glorious task. The quantum of material and the variety of subjects, the comprehensiveness of the volume, will speak for itself, revealing the extent of labour that has gone into this work of editing,—a service rendered by a single person with an all-out concentration of effort on the project.

The Souvenir makes a departure from the usual commemoration volumes that are generally published on occasions of this kind in the important sense that the publication comes out as a standard textbook containing a complete essence of the writings of Sri Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. May we call it a mini-encyclopaedia of spiritual teaching?

The editor also has taken pains to see that the publication assumes a permanent value and remains a sort of document detailing the origin and the development of the Divine Life Society, which is by itself a history of a most remarkable nature. The love and labour that is at the back of this standard work will get itself revealed to anyone who studies it with an equal degree of earnestness.

—THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY

10th August, 1987.









**His Holiness Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj**





**Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj**  
President, The Divine Life Society





**Sri Swami Madhavanandaji Maharaj**  
Vice-President, The Divine Life Society



**Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj**  
General Secretary, The Divine Life Society



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**THE MASTER  
HIS MISSION  
AND  
HIS WORKS**





**SECTION I**  
**Swami Sivananda**  
**and**  
**His Mission**





# Sivananda Gita

(H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj)

(This was written by Sri Gurudev in a matter of 60 minutes, in the year 1946)

I was born of P.S. Vengu Iyer and Parvathi Ammal on the 8th September 1887 at Pattamadai, Tinnevely Dt., South India, in the line of Appayya Dixit. My star is Bharani.

I was extremely mischievous in my boyhood. I studied in the S.P.G. College, Trinopoly. I was a Doctor in the Malaya States for 10 years. I took Sannyasa in 1924 in Rishikesh.

I did Tapas and meditation for 15 years. I went on teaching tours for 10 years. I founded the Divine Life Society in 1936 and the All-World Religious Federation in 1945.

I am child-like in my Svabhava. So I mix with all. I am ever happy and joyful and make others also happy and joyful.

I am full of educative humour. I radiate joy through humour.

I respect all. I do salutations to all first. I always speak sweetly. I walk quickly.

I do Japa and meditation while walking and while at work also.

I am ever hard-working. I have intense application to work. I never leave a work till it is finished. I never procrastinate any work. I finish it then and there. I am very quick in doing things.

I cannot suppress the spirit of service in me. I cannot live without service. I

take immense delight in service. Service has elevated me. Service has purified me.

I know well how to extract work from others. I extract work through kindness, service, respect and love.

I am very regular in doing Asanas. I do Pranayama also regularly. These give me wonderful health and energy. I run round the Bhajan Hall daily.

I cannot deliver fiery lectures sitting on a special seat. Special seat pricks me. I stand up or throw the seat away and then begin to speak. I never sat on a special seat when I presided over spiritual conferences.

I rejoice in giving. I always give.

I am 59 now. I ever feel I am quite young. I am full of vigour, vim and vitality. I am ever cheerful. I sing, dance, run and jump in joy. I am robust and strong. I can digest any kind of food.

I continuously work, read and write. I never go to hill-stations or sea-side for a holiday. Change of work gives rest. Meditation gives abundant rest.

Work gives me delight. Service gives me happiness. Writing bestows joy. Meditation energises and invigorates me. Kirtan vivifies me.

"Aham Brahma Asmi, Sivoham, Soham, Sat-Chit-Ananda Swaroopoham." This is my favourite formula for Vedantic meditation.

Song of "Chidanand" is my favourite song for singing.

*"Hare Rama Hare Rama  
Rama Rama Hare Hare,  
Hare Krishna Hare Krishna  
Krishna Krishna Hare Hare."*

This Mahamantra Kirtan is my favourite Kirtan.

At the present moment I am the richest man in the whole world. My heart is full. Further, all the wealth of the Lord belongs to me now. Hence, I am King of Kings, Emperor of Emperors, Shah of Shahs, Maha Rajah of Maha Rajahs. I take pity on the mundane kings. My dominion is limitless. My wealth is inexhaustible.

My joy is inexpressible. My treasure is immeasurable. I attained this through Sannyasa, renunciation, untiring selfless service, Japa, Kirtan and meditation.

I am tall. My height is 6 feet. I have a sinewy frame. I have symmetrical limbs. I am a first class gymnast.

I fast on Ekadasi. I do not take even a drop of water on that day. I take milk and fruits on Sundays.

I lead a simple natural life. There is a fountain of youth in me. I beam with joy. I observe fasting, resting, airing, bathing, breathing, exercising, sun-bathing and enjoy freedom, power, beauty, courage, poise and health.

I love nature, music, art, poetry, philosophy, beauty, goodness, solitude, meditation, Yoga and Vedanta.

I am humble and simple. I am frank and straightforward. I am perfectly tolerant and catholic. I am merciful and sympathetic. I have spontaneous and untrained generosity.

I am bold and cheerful. I am patient.

I can bear insult and injury. I am forgiving. I am free from vindictive nature. I return good for evil. I serve that man who has injured me, with joy.

I love Ganga and the Himalayas. Ganga is my Mother Divine. Himalayas is my Father Divine. They inspire and guide me. I take bath in Ganga. I adore Ganga. I feed the fishes of Ganga.

I wave light to Mother Ganga. I pray to Ganga. I do salutations to Ganga. I sing the glory of Ganga. I write about the grandeur and glory of Ganga.

Ganga has nourished me. Ganga has comforted me. Ganga has taught me the Truths of the Upanishads. Glory to Mother Ganga!

My daily routine is like that of Lord Buddha. I always remain in the room. I do Japa, Kirtan and meditation. I study sacred books. I write. I come out of the room for a short time for work, service and interview.

I talk a little. I think much. I meditate much. I try to do much and serve much.

I do not waste even a single minute. I ever keep myself fully occupied. I lead a well-regulated life. I perform worship of Atma at all times. I work for the good of others.

Gita, Upanishads, Bhagavata, Yoga-Vasishtha, Avadhoot Gita, Viveka-Chudamani are my constant companions.

I am a strange mixture of service, devotion, Yoga and wisdom. I am a follower of Sri Sankara. I am a Kevala-Adwaita Vedantin. I am not at all a dry lip Vedantin. I am a practical Vedantin. Glory to Sri Sankara.

I practise and advocate the Yoga of Synthesis. I practise *Ahimsa*, *Satyam* and *Brahmacharya*.

I respect all Saints and Prophets of all religions. I respect all religions, all cults, all faiths and all creeds.

I serve all, love all, mix with all and see the Lord in all. I stick to my promises. I serve the poor. This gives me delight. I do mental prostrations to asses, dogs, trees, bricks, stones and all creatures. I respect elders and Sadhus. I obey. I please all through sincere selfless service.

I attend on guests very carefully. I run hither and thither to serve them. I shampoo the legs of sick persons and Sadhus.

I give very prompt reply to all my letters. I do several things at a time. I write with electric speed.

I spend everything. I do lot of charity. I do not keep anything. I take immense pleasure in feeding the poor and my students. I try to be a mother to them.

I talk to others on things which I have myself practised. I look within always, introspect, analyse and examine. I hold the *Trisul*,—spiritual diary, daily routine and resolve.

I served my Masters with great sincerity and intense faith and devotion. I learnt many useful lessons for life. I developed many virtues.

I wandered without food during my Parivrajaka life. I slept on the roadside at night without clothing during winter. I ate dried bread with water.

I stick tenaciously with my principles

and ideals. I do not argue much. I live in silence.

I pray and do Kirtan for the peace of the whole world, for the health and peace of sick people, and for the peace of the departed souls and the earth-bound spirits also.

I take a dip in the Ganges in the name of all those who are longing for a bath in the Ganges.

I sing the names of all saints of all religions in the Bhajan Hall. I observe All-Saints' day and All-Souls' day.

I constantly meditate on the following:

*Prajanam Brahma, Aham Brahma  
Asmi, Tat Twam Asi, Ayam Atma Brahma,  
Satyam Jnanam Anantam Brahma, Santam  
Sivam Adwaitam.*

*Aham Atma Gudakesa; Aham Atma  
Nirakarah Sarvavyapeec Svabhavatah.*

*Brahma Satyam Jagan Mithya Jeevo  
Brahmaiva naparaha. Akarta, Abhokta,  
Asangha, Sakshi; Ajo Nityah Saswatoyam  
Purano. Jyotishamapi Tat Jyotih.*

To raise the fallen, to lead the blind, to share what I have with others, to bring solace to the afflicted and to cheer up the suffering are my ideals.

To have perfect faith in God, to love my neighbour as my own Self, to love God with all my heart and soul, to protect cows, animals, women and children are my aims.

My watchword is love. My goal is *Sahaja Samadhi Avastha*, or the natural, continuous superconscious state.

### *Sivananda on 'Peace'—1*

Many are working today for the promotion of world peace without having peace in themselves. Their loud propaganda, big talk and lectures cause more confusion, conflict and discord.



# How God Came Into My Life

(*H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj*)

It would be easy to dismiss the question by saying: Yes, after a prolonged period of intense austerities and meditation while I was living in Swarg Ashram during which I had the Darshan of a number of Maharshis and their blessings, the Lord appeared before me in the form of Sri Krishna.

But that would not be the whole truth, nor a sufficient answer to a question relating to God, Who is Infinite, Unlimited and beyond the reach of the speech and mind.

Cosmic Consciousness is not an accident or chance. It is the summit, accessible by a thorny path that has steep, slippery steps. I have ascended them, step by step, the hard way; but, at every step, I have experienced God coming into my life and lifting me easily to the next step.

My father was fond of ceremonial worship (Puja) in which he was very regular. To my child-mind, the Image he worshipped was God; and I delighted in helping father in the worship, by bringing him flowers and other articles of worship. The deep inner satisfaction that he and I derived from such worship implanted in my heart the deep conviction that God is in such images devoutly worshipped by His devotees. Thus did God come into my life first and placed my foot at the first rung of the Ladder.

As an adult, I was fond of gymnastics and vigorous exercises. I learnt fencing from a teacher who belonged to a low caste; he was a Harijan. I could go to him only for a few days, before I was made to understand that it was unbecoming of a caste Brahmin to play the student to an untouch-

able. I thought deeply over the matter. One moment I felt that the God whom we all worshipped in the image in my father's Puja-room had jumped over to the heart of this untouchable. He was my Guru, all right! So, I immediately went to him with flowers, sweets and cloth, and garlanded him, placed flowers at his feet and prostrated myself before him. Thus did God come into my life to remove the veil of caste distinctions.

How very valuable this step was I could realise very soon after this; for, I was to enter the medical profession and serve all, and the persistence of caste distinction would have made that service a mockery. With this mist cleared by the Light of God, it was very easy and natural for me to serve everyone. I took very keen delight in every kind of service connected with healing and alleviation of human misery. If there was a good prescription for malaria, I felt that the whole world should know it the next moment. Any knowledge about the prevention of disease, promotion of health and healing of diseases,—I was eager to acquire and share with all.

Then, God came into my life in the form of the sick in Malaya. It is difficult for me now to single out any instance; and perhaps it is unnecessary. Time and space are concepts of the mind and have no meaning in God. I can look back now upon the whole period of my stay in Malaya as a single event in which God came to me in the form of the sick and suffering. People are sick physically and mentally. To some life is lingering death; and to some death

is more welcome than life. Some lead a miserable life, unable to face death; some invite death and commit suicide unable to face life. The aspiration grew, within me, that if God had not made this world merely as a hell where wicked people would be thrown, to suffer, and if there is (as I intuitively felt there should be) something other than this misery and this helpless existence, it should be known and experienced.

It was at this crucial point in my life that God came to me as a religious mendicant who gave me the first lessons in Vedanta. The positive aspects of life here, and the real end and aim of human life, were made apparent. This drew me from Malaya to the Himalaya. God came to me in the form of all-consuming aspiration to realise Him as the Self of all.

Meditation and service went on apace; and with them came various spiritual experiences, till body, mind and intellect as the limiting adjuncts vanished; and the whole universe shone in His Light. God then came in the form of this Light in which every thing assumed a divine shape; and pain and suffering that seemed to haunt everybody appeared to be a mirage, the illusion that ignorance creates, on account of low sensual appetites that lurk in man.

One more milestone had to be passed in order to know '*Sarvam Khalvidam Brah-*

*ma'*. Early in 1950 (on the 8th January) God came to me in the form of a half-demented assailant, who disturbed the night Satsanga at the Ashram. His attempt failed. I bowed to him, worshipped him and sent him home. Evil exists to glorify the good! Evil is a superficial appearance; beneath its veil, the one Self shines in all.

A noteworthy fact ought to be mentioned here. In this evolution, nothing gained previously is entirely discarded at any later stage. One coalesced into the next; and the Yoga of Synthesis was the fruit. The effective and intelligent synthesis of *Murti-Puja*, selfless service of the sick, meditation, the cultivation of cosmic love that transcended the barriers of caste, creed and religion, with the ultimate aim of attaining Cosmic Consciousness was revealed. This knowledge had immediately to be shared. All this had become an integral part of my being.

The mission had been gathering strength and spreading. It was in 1950 that I undertook the All-India Tour. Then God came to me in His Virat Swarup, multitudes of devotees, eager to listen to the tenets of divine life. At every centre I felt that God spoke through me, and He Himself in His Virat-Form spread out before me as the multitude, listened to it. He sang with me; He prayed with me; He spoke and He listened. *Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma*.

### *Sivananda on 'Peace'—2*

A proper understanding of the essential unity of religions is the most effective and powerful factor in bringing about peace in this world. It will remove all superficial differences and conflicts, which create restlessness, discord and quarrels.



# Swami Sivananda

## BIRTH AND BOYHOOD

On the 8th of September 1887, in the early hours of the morning, was born a boy-child in the village of Pattamadai on the banks of the river Tamraparni in South India. Sri P.S. Vengu Iyer, a Tahsildar and a great Siva-Bhakta, and Srimati Parvati Ammal, an equally great God-fearing lady, were the fortunate parents of this child. The happy couple christened this last and third son of theirs, Kuppuswamy.

Boy Kuppuswamy was intelligent and mischievous. In his boyhood itself he showed signs of renunciation and love for fellow-beings. He used to pity the poor, feed the hungry at the door, and make his father throw a pie into the hands of the pauper passing by. He often got cakes and sweetmeats from his mother and distributed them liberally to his younger companions, dogs, cats, cows and sparrows, himself not eating a bit. He used to bring flowers and *bael* leaves for his father's Siva-Puja.

At the Rajah's High School, Ettayapuram, where he studied, Kuppuswamy always topped the class and won prizes every year. He had a sweet voice and wonderful memory. After the completion of the Matriculation examination, he studied at the S.P.G. College, Tiruchirapalli. In the college he used to take part in debates and dramas. He played the part of Helena, beautifully, when Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" was staged in 1905.

After the completion of the First Arts Examination, Kuppuswamy went to the Medical School at Tanjore to study medicine. He used to be tremendously indus-

trious and never went home during the holidays. He would spend the entire period in the hospital. He had free admission into the operation theatre. Kuppuswamy was first in all the subjects. He possessed more knowledge than doctors with covetable degrees, and in the first year itself he could answer the papers which the final year student could not.

Kuppuswamy completed the course and earned the title of M.B., C.M. He practised at Tiruchi. While practising, he started a medical journal called "The Ambrosia". He got one hundred rupees from his mother for the initial expenses of running the journal. Later, when his mother wanted a hundred and fifty rupees for celebrating some festival, Dr. Kuppuswamy had the money ready for her. Even then he used to distribute the journal freely; he was shy to ask people for contribution.

## DOCTOR IN MALAYA

A call came to Dr. Kuppuswamy from Malaya (now Malaysia), soon after the death of his father. He used to have an adventurous spirit in him. In 1913, he left India in the "S.S. Tara". Kuppuswamy belonged to an orthodox Brahmin family and was afraid to take non-vegetarian food in the ship. So he carried with him a good quantity of sweets which his mother had prepared for him. When he arrived in Singapore, he was almost half dead.

Dr. Kuppuswamy describes his experiences in Malaya: "Immediately after disembarking, I went to the residence of Dr. Iyengar. He gave me a letter of introduction to his friend, Dr. Harold Parsons, a medical practitioner in Seremban. When I arrived there, Dr. Parsons introduced me



to Mr. A.G. Robins, the manager of a nearby rubber estate which had its own hospital. Fortunately for me, Mr. Robins was just in need of an assistant to work in the Estate Hospital. He was a terrible man with a violent temper, a giant figure, tall and stout. He asked me, 'Can you manage a hospital all by yourself?' I replied, 'Yes, I can manage even three hospitals'. I was appointed at once. I had been told by a local Indian resident that I ought not to accept, in accordance with their policy, anything less than a hundred dollars a month. Mr. Robins agreed to give me one hundred and fifty dollars to start with."

The young doctor worked very hard. Unusual handicaps began to tell upon him and he felt like resigning the job after some time, but Mr. Robins would not allow him to go.

Dr. Kuppuswamy was very kind, sympathetic, humorous, witty and sweet-speaking. Hopeless cases came to him, but success was sure. Everywhere people declared that he had a special gift from God for the miraculous cures effected in the patients and acclaimed him as a very kind and sympathetic doctor with a charming and majestic personality. In serious cases, he kept vigil all the night. In his private practice, Dr. Kuppuswamy used to attend to the poor and often not charge even visiting or consulting fees. Instead, he would give them money for special diet or to cover their own expenses after discharge from hospital. He gave money like water.

Once a poor man, drenched to the skin, came to the doctor at night. His wife was in birth pangs. The doctor went at once to her aid and, after attending to her, stayed outside the hut, in spite of the heavy rain. Only after the safe delivery of the

child did the doctor return home the next morning.

In spite of his busy life, Dr. Kuppuswamy served the Sadhus, Sannyasins and beggars. He attended marriage functions, parties and other social gatherings. Once a Sadhu gave him the book, '*Jiva-Brahma-Aikyam*' by Sri Swami Satchidananda. It ignited the dormant spirituality in him. He began to study the books of Sankara Acharya, Swami Rama Tirtha, Swami Vivekananda, The Imitation of Christ, the Bible, and the literature of the Theosophical Society. He was very regular in his daily worship, prayer and Yoga Asanas. Study of sacred scriptures like the Gita, the Mahabharata, the Bhagavata and the Ramayana was done with great devotion. Sometimes he conducted 'Nandanar Charitham' (Harikatha) and sang Bhajans and Kirtans. He practised *Anahata*, *Laya* and *Svara-Yoga* Sadhana.

High class dress and collection of curious and fancy articles of gold, silver and sandalwood always attracted the doctor. Sometimes he purchased various kinds of gold rings and necklaces and wore them all at the same time. He used to wear ten rings on ten fingers! When he entered shops, he never wasted his time in selection, haggling and bargaining. He gathered all that he saw. He paid the shopkeepers' bills without scrutiny.

Nothing could tempt the doctor. His heart was as pure as the Himalayan snow. His immense philanthropy and spirit of service and renunciation endeared him to all. People lovingly called him the "Heart of Love".

The rich doctor did not engage a cook permanently. He was his own cook, though he had work that gave him no leisure. Occasionally he engaged a cook. A cook of

his, one day, wanted to have a photograph of himself taken. The doctor took him with great joy to a first class studio, made the cook put on his own suit, shoes and hat and had a photo taken.

### RENUNCIATION

As days passed, he reflected more and more within himself and wanted to renounce the world. His heart was purified through loving service. At last, Dr. Kuppuswamy, enjoying a lucrative practice, renounced the world, in the year 1922. He left Malaya for India.

From Madras he proceeded to the house of a friend and left his luggage there. He began his pilgrimage. At Benares, he had *Darshan* of Lord Visvanath. He visited *Mahatmas* and temples. At Dhalaj, a village on the banks of the Chandrabhaga river, in Maharashtra, he met a postmaster and lived with him. He acted as the postmaster's cook, and when the latter arrived home in the evening, the doctor was ready to shampoo his legs, in spite of his remonstrances. It was the postmaster who suggested 'Rishikesh' when the aspiring doctor wanted a place for solitary meditation.

Dr. Kuppuswamy reached Rishikesh on the 8th of May, 1924. On the 1st of June, 1924, there came His Holiness Sri Swami Visvananda Saraswati. The doctor saw a *Guru* in the monk and the monk saw a *Chela* in the doctor. After a brief personal talk, Dr. Kuppuswamy was initiated into the Sannyasa order by Swami Visvananda. Swami Vishnudevanandaji Maharaj, the Mahant of Sri Kailasa Ashram, performed the *Viraja Homa* ceremonies. The Guru named the doctor Swami Sivananda Saraswati. Swami Visvananda wrote the necessary instructions about Sannyasa Dharma from Benares. Swami Sivananda stayed at Swargashram for Sadhana.

### SADHANA

Swami Sivananda dressed to clothe himself, ate to live, and lived to serve humanity. A small dilapidated *Kutir*, not resorted to by others, and infested with scorpions, protected him from rain and sun. Living in that *Kutir*, he did intense *Tapas*, observed silence, and fasted. Often he fasted for days together. He would keep a good stock of dry bread in his room, and for a week have this, together with Ganga water. He would stand up to the hips in the ice-cold Ganga in winter mornings and commence his *Japa*, coming out only when the sun appeared. He would spend more than twelve hours in daily meditation. With all his intense *Tapas*, Swamiji did not neglect service of the sick. He visited the huts of the Sadhus with medicines, served them, and shampooed their legs. He begged food on their behalf and fed them with his own hands when they fell sick. He brought water from the Ganga and washed their *Kutirs*. He attended upon cholera and smallpox cases. When necessary, he kept vigil through the night by the side of the bed of the ailing Sadhu. He carried sick persons on his back to the hospital. With some money from his insurance policy that had matured, Swamiji started a charitable dispensary at Lakshmanjhula, in 1927. He served the pilgrims and saw *Narayana* in them.

Swamiji practised all the various Yogas and studied the scriptures. After years of intense and unbroken Sadhana, he enjoyed the bliss of Nirvikalpa Samadhi. He had come to the end of his spiritual journey.

He used to gather bits of paper, margins of newspapers and used envelopes, and stitch them into little notebooks. He entered some self-instructions in them. Some of the instructions found in them read thus:



"Give up salt, give up sugar, give up spices, give up vegetables, give up chutnies, give up tamarind". In another we read: "Serve Bhangis, serve rogues, serve inferiors, remove faecal matter, clean clothes of Sadhus—take delight, carry water". In another page: "Do not revenge, resist not evil, return good for evil, bear insult and injury". On some neat little pages we again read: "Forget like a child any injury done by somebody, immediately. Never keep it in the heart. It kindles hatred. Cultivate Maitri, Karuna, Daya, Prema, Kshama". In another paragraph we see: "Develop good manners, extreme politeness, courtesy, etiquette, good demeanour, nobility, gentleness, mildness. Never be rude, harsh, or cruel. There is nothing to be hated in the world. Hatred is ignorance. All contempt for anything or being must be removed through love and Vichara".

Swamiji travelled the whole length and breadth of India during his Parivrajaka life. He visited important places of pilgrimage in the South, including Rameswaram. He conducted Sankirtan and delivered lectures. Swamiji, then went on a trip to Kailas-manas-sarovar and Badrinath.

### THE ORGANISATION

He returned after the pilgrimage, to Rishikesh, and in the year 1936 sowed the seed of *The Divine Life Society* on the right bank of the holy Ganga. He found an old Kutir, dilapidated and disused, which looked like an abandoned cowshed. To him it was more than a palace. It had four 'rooms'. He cleaned the Kutir, and occupied it. Then, the increasing number of disciples who sought his lotus-feet, undaunted by forbidding conditions of living, necessitated

expansion. They found more cowsheds, vacant, but uninhabitably filthy. In one room, an old cowherd was living; the others were full of hay and dung. In about a year or so, the old cowherd also vacated his 'room', and the Divine Life army completed the occupation. Thus began the early life of The Divine Life Society.

From this small beginning the Society grew imperceptibly and it is now the Headquarters of a world-wide Organisation having a large number of Branches both within the country and outside. He got the Divine Life Society Registered as a Trust in the year 1936, with the main objects of dissemination of spiritual knowledge and selfless service of humanity. The free distribution of spiritual literature drew a steady flow of disciples to Sri Swamiji. With the getting of able hands, he started the various departments of the Society to provide suitable fields of activity for the purification of their hearts and to grow spiritually.

The Society's Silver Jubilee was celebrated in 1961, by which time the Master saw the fulfilment of his mission in his own lifetime.

Swami Sivananda radiated his divine and lofty message of service, meditation and God-realisation to all parts of the world through his books, running to more than three hundred, through periodicals and letters. His devoted disciples are drawn from all religions, cults and creeds in the world.

Swami Sivananda's Yoga, which he has significantly called the 'Yoga of Synthesis', effects a harmonious development of the 'hand', 'head' and 'heart' through the practice of Karma-Yoga, Jnana-Yoga and Bhakti-Yoga.



On the 14th of July 1963, the Great samadhi in his Kutir on the bank of the Soul, Swami Sivananda entered Maha-Ganga, in Shivanandanagar.

## Sivananda—An Answer to the Need of the Time

(Sri Swami Chidananda)

In the religious and social history of this land of ours, this land of the Vedas and Varnashrama, one phenomenon is witnessed recurring periodically through the past centuries. Time to time the great vision of the ancient seers, the eternal verities of religion and spiritual life, (recorded as they are in the sacred tongue, the classical Sanskrit language) becomes confined within the circle of a narrow oligarchy of the upper orthodox class. The scriptures, being inaccessible to the unlearned and the illiterate, become the exclusive monopoly of the Sanskrit-knowing higher class and the majority degenerates gradually into indifference and superstition. A vast section of people toiling day and night for a livelihood, has neither the energy to make a serious study and master Sanskrit nor gets the time to sit long hours at the feet of the Pundit to get enlightened. Thus they lose touch with the contents of sacred literature and the orthodox section comes to acquire a sort of tyrannical hold over the masses on all questions bearing on God, ethics and after-life.

At such junctures, there invariably appears on the scene, a person inspired by lofty ideals, who perceiving the widening gulf that is created between him and the people, at once sets about 'bridging' it in

the way best suited to the particular occasion. He applies himself to bringing out the choicest gems of religion in the language of the people, in a manner acceptable to popular taste and to the need of the hour. Getting into their midst the message of beauty and hope in a form they can easily understand, the people turn round and eagerly grasp their heritage again and at once find their lives transformed by it. Thus responding to the rousing message of this people's man, there takes place a general awakening in society.

Laughed at by the learned, condemned by the orthodox and ridiculed by the sceptic, these few far-sighted ones disinterestedly rendered their service to the people. Sri Jnanadev thus gave his peerless Gita and other works to the Maharashtra (even as much later Dr. Besant did to the anglicised youth of the southern provinces) while Ekanath Maharaj brought the great Bhagavata to the homes of the people innocent of Sanskrit. The brave-hearted Potana, the genius of Sant Tulsidas and Kambar of sacred memory, brought the precious gems of the Ramayana to the doors of the humblest in Andhradesa, Hindustan and Tamilnad respectively. They have become household words there and have come to be well known in all the land.

Lakshmishakavi and Moropant have done like services to the Kannada and Marathi people with their exquisite Kavyas rendering the sacred Mahabharata in the vernacular. Likewise the lofty thoughts of the Vedanta are now available to all in the Vichara-Sagara of Nischaldas.

Coming to the present era, a similar situation had begun to develop; but this time it was rendered very queer by a singular irony of Fate. Doubtless history repeats itself, but Providence is sometimes apt to exhibit a strange humour and thus this time, she made it repeat itself with a funny twist in it. What distinguished the present mass from previous history, was that instead of the unlearned masses being deprived of and estranged from God and religion, this time the once orthodox upper class, the once jealous custodians of the scriptures, themselves now fell a prey to the advent of new ideas and ideals from the Occident. Sanskrit was relegated overnight to the dust of the antiquary's shelf. Loyalty to religion, tradition, and time-honoured social customs came to be regarded as something not quite in fashion for which one had to make an apology. The intelligentsia were the first victims to the baneful educational policy of the East India Company whose avowed and openly admitted policy it was to "gradually and eventually render the English tongue into the general language for the nation."

The systematic adoption of English as the medium of instruction following Lord Macaulay's Minute of 1835, converted the once exclusive custodians of Sanskrit lore into a new English-knowing educated class that supplied the Company with qualified

scribes, interpreters, assistants, etc. Later under the Crown, they became the bench clerks, the camp clerks of the civilians, revenue clerks, accountants, etc. So now that little section which had the key to the land's culture in its keeping, had shelved Sanskrit learning, forgotten the Shastras, lost contact with all original tradition and begun to get anglicised by bounds. The treasurers themselves neglected the treasury and the wealth that it contained! How this affected society in general may be imagined!

This time, therefore, the role of reviver and reclamer of scriptural knowledge and of spiritual life, devolved upon one who was himself of this new class. And the irony of it all lay in the fact that he had necessarily to do this work in the very language that had brought on the decadence which he was to arrest. For the historical malady was not, in the present case, confined to any particular linguistic province or region like Maharashtra, Andhradesa or Tamilnad but was epidemic through the length and breadth of Bharatavarsha. The rulers' language had been very generously widespread in its benign mischief. This made the problem assume a form distinctively peculiar to India, possessing as she does, a dozen different vernaculars with widely divergent scripts. These regional vernaculars were restricted in their scope and to tackle the problem through any one of them, would mean a failure to reach and cover the entire seat of the trouble. And so, even as the burnt shoe-leather served the shoe-bite of the simple villager or as the auto-vaccine that the modern physician prepared from the body of the patient himself, this 'case'



called for medication on like lines. Providence consequently chose an educated and somewhat anglicised apostle to resuscitate the Indian genius. The very factor that had been largely responsible in bringing on the malady, now became the medium of doing this work of restoration. Swami Sivanandaji set himself to broadcast the truths of Religion and Spirituality in English, to a people who had gradually begun to feel that as a sort of second mother tongue.

Writing in simple and easy English, Swamiji commenced systematically spreading into every nook and corner of the land, the neglected and discarded principles of divine-living, the living of a 'Life in the Spirit' on earth. Ceaselessly and tirelessly Swamiji has striven to hammer into a self-forgetful people, the precious ideas and ideals that had been pushed out of their ken by the inroads of an Occidental culture. For, in effect the harm had not stopped with a mere decay of the nation's literature, but there had poured over the land a host of ideas and customs entirely detrimental and antagonistic to the indigenous culture and the spiritual genius of the nation. The whole outlook of the nation was turning commercial and mercenary. Those remote remnants of the orthodox community that remained untouched by the foreign 'infection', retained the old traditions merely as a paying profession, specialising in astrology, astronomy, etc., and in the performance of formal rites and ceremonies, as Purohits or Shastris; else they were Pundits versed in debate and grammar. Spirituality everywhere came to be at a sad discount.

By making use of every possible me-

thod and every available avenue, Swamiji flooded the land with spiritual knowledge. He acquainted thousands with the life-giving facts and details of spiritual life, God, Religion, Morality and Right Conduct (Dharma). The truths locked up in Devanagari began to be boldly broadcast to all in a style of English, so simple and so direct that, even a high-school lad in his teens could understand it without difficulty at the first perusal. Since nearly a decade and a half, he has been bringing the Upanishads, the Tantras, the Yoga Sutras, the Bhagavata, the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, Gita and the Yoga-vasishtha to the light of day again. Through his efforts the vital subject of Brahmacharya has regained its legitimate place in the knowledge of the youth and student population of the country. The living of the householders' life upon very idealistic lines, was advocated with considerable success through his works. Very many householders are themselves living testimonies to this fact now. The ideal of the highest Goal of life—of God-realisation—the only real purpose of human birth, he has constantly raised up before the nation's eyes. The details of the various kinds of practical Sadhanas to achieve this end, Swamiji patiently and painstakingly collected, classified and arranged, gave to the world in his own inimitable, direct, forceful and clear style. In this destined role of his as disseminator of spiritual knowledge and awakener of the masses, Swamiji has come to be known by all for his enthusiastic propagation of purely non-sectarian universal ideas of the most tolerant and all-embracing character, comprising the truths common to the major religions of the world. This then has been his life's work, the part given to his



share in the nation's destiny by the Benign Powers that ever watchfully guide, control and shape the course of all things on this terrestrial plane. How far he has succeeded in his work is patent to any observer. It is apparent in the almost nation-wide awakening that has gradually taken place among all sections of the public. His dy-

namic and indefatigable dissemination and propaganda, has specially had a strong effect upon the middle and the uppermiddle classes that were rapidly becoming unduly westernised. They have been brought back to a proper appraisal of the worth and beauty of their own religious and cultural heritage.

## The Divine Life Movement

*(H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj)*

### DAWN OF A NEW VISION

"Is there not a higher mission in life than the daily round of official duties, eating and drinking? Is there not any higher form of eternal happiness than these transitory and illusory pleasures? How uncertain is life here! How insecure is existence on this earth-plane, with various kinds of diseases, anxieties, worries, fear and disappointments! The world of names and forms is constantly changing. Time is fleeting. All hopes of happiness in this world terminate in pain, despair and sorrow."

Such were the thoughts constantly rising in my mind, when I was serving as a doctor in Malaya. The doctor's profession gave me ample evidence of the sufferings of this world. For a Vairagi who has a sympathetic heart, the world is full of pain. True and lasting happiness cannot be found merely in gathering wealth. With the purification of heart through selfless service, I had a new vision. I was deeply convinced that there must be a place—a sweet home of pristine glory and purity and divine splendour—where absolute security, perfect peace and lasting happiness can be had through Self-realisation.

### AS A WANDERING MENDICANT

In 1923, I gave up the life of ease, comfort and luxury in Malaya and reached India in search of an ideal centre for purposes of prayer and contemplation, study and a higher form of service to the world. I took to the life of a mendicant, a true seeker after Truth. I reached Banaras and had Darshan of Lord Shiva. Then I proceeded to Nasik, Poona and other important religious centres. From Poona I walked to Pandarpore, a distance of seventy miles. On my way I stayed for a couple of days in the Ashram of Yogi Narayan Maharaj at Khedgaon. Then I spent some four months in Dhalaj on the banks of Chandrabhaga. During my incessant travels, I learnt how to adjust and adapt myself to various types of people.

I learnt a lot from the lives of Yogins, Mahatmas and great men. The spirit of service ingrained in me enabled me to lead a smooth life of peace everywhere. The life of a mendicant during pilgrimage helped me to develop in a great measure *Titikksha* (forbearance), equal-vision and a balanced state of mind in pleasure and pain.

I met many Mahatmas and learnt wonderful lessons. On some days, I had to go without food and walk mile after mile. With a smile, I faced all hardships. I led the life of a wandering monk, just for a short period, in search of my Guru and of a suitable place charged with spiritual vibrations, for spending my life in seclusion and to do rigorous Sadhana.

### NECESSITY OF A GURU

The spiritual path is beset with many obstacles. The Guru will guide the aspirants safely and remove all sorts of difficulties they have to face. He will inspire the students and give them spiritual powers through his blessings. Guru, Ishwara, Truth and Mantra are one. There is no other way of overcoming the vicious worldly *Samskaras* of the passionate nature of raw, worldly-minded persons than personal contact with and service to the Guru.

In search of a Guru, I reached Rishikesh and prayed to the Lord for His Grace. There are many egoistic students who say: "I need no Guru. God is my Guru." They change their own robes and live independently. When difficulties and troubles confront them, they are bewildered. I do not like the rules and regulations of the scriptures, sages and saints to be violated. When there is a change of heart, there should be a change in the external form also. The glory and the liberty of a Sannyasi can hardly be imagined by the timid and the weak. From the sacred hands of Paramahansa Viswananda Saraswati, I received holy initiation on the banks of the Ganges on 1st June, 1924. The religious rite of Viraja Homa was done for me by my Acharya Guru, Sri Swami Vishnudevanandaji Maharaj at Kailas Ashram.

A personal Guru is necessary in the

beginning. He alone can show you the path to attain God, who is the Guru of Gurus, and obviate the snares and pitfalls on your path. Self-realisation is a transcendental experience. You can march in the spiritual path only by placing implicit faith in the words of sages who have realised the Truth (Apta Vakya) and attained knowledge of the Self.

Guru's Grace is needed by the disciple. This does not mean that the disciple should sit idle and expect a miracle from the Guru to push him directly into Samadhi. The Guru cannot do Sadhana for the student. It is foolish to expect spiritual attainments from a drop of Kamandalu water from the Guru. The Guru can guide the student, clear his doubts, pave the way, remove the snares, pitfalls and obstacles and throw light on the path. But it is the disciple himself who has to walk every step in the spiritual path.

Spiritual progress requires intense and unswerving faith in the teachings of the Guru and the Shastras, burning and lasting Vairagya, yearning for liberation, adamant will, fiery resolve, iron determination, unruffled patience, leech-like tenacity, clock-like regularity, child-like simplicity.

If you have no Guru, take Lord Krishna or Shiva or Rama or Christ as your Guru. Pray to Him. Meditate on Him. Sing His Name. He will send you a suitable Guru.

### THE JOURNEY'S END

I came to Rishikesh in June 1924 and found it my destination. My Guru gave me initiation and enough spiritual strength and blessings. Gurus can do this much only. It is the student who has to do intense and rigorous Sadhana. Rishikesh is



a Railway Station in the District of Dehra Dun, Uttar Pradesh, in the Himalayas. It is a holy place with many Mahatmas. There are Kshetras (alms-houses) to provide free food for all Sadhus and Yogins and aspirants. They can stay in any of the Dharma-salas or Kutias or have their own thatched cottages and huts in any place. Near about Rishikesh, there are many charming places like Brahmapuri Forests, Nilakantha, Vasisht Guha, Tapovanam. Sadhus who stay in such places get their dry rations once in fifteen days and prepare their own food.

The scenery of the Himalayas is charming, soul-elevating. The Holy Ganga is a blessing. One can spend hours in contemplation, sitting on a rock or on a sand-bank by the side of the Ganga. There are some Libraries from where we can get authoritative works in Sanskrit, English and Hindi on Yoga and Philosophy. Some learned Mahatmas conduct regular daily classes and give private tuition to deserving students. The climate of the place is fine—slightly cold in winter (November to March) and slightly hot in summer (April to June). There are allopathic and Ayurvedic Hospitals to attend to the sick. Thus I found Rishikesh an ideal place for intense and undisturbed spiritual practices true for all seekers after Truth.

### HOW I SYNTHESISED MY SADHANA

Service of the sick and the poor and the Mahatmas purifies the heart. This is a field for developing all divine qualities such as compassion, sympathy, mercy, generosity. That helps to destroy the evil qualities and impurities of the mind such as egoism, selfishness, pride, hatred, anger, lust, jealousy, etc. Mahatmas and the poor villagers who were sick did not have pro-

per medical aid. Thousands of pilgrims to Badrinath, Kedarnath also needed medical help. Therefore I started a small dispensary, *Satyasevashram*, at Lakshmanjhula on the way to Badri-Kedar, and served the devotees with great love and devotion. I arranged special diet for the serious cases and provided milk and other requirements. Spiritual evolution is quicker through service done with proper Bhav and attitude.

For maintaining a high standard of health, I practised Asanas, Pranayamas, Mudras and Bandhas. I used to go out for long brisk walks in the evenings. I combined physical exercises such as Dand and Bhaitak also. I paid special attention to simple living, high thinking, light food, deep study, silent meditation and regular prayers. I loved seclusion and observed Mowna. I did not like company and futile talk. From the Ram Ashram Library in Muni-ki-reti I used to get some books for my study and devoted some time to study every day. I kept always a Dictionary by my side and looked up the meaning of difficult words. Rest and relaxation gave me enough strength to carry on intense Sadhana. I moved closely with some Mahatmas but I never indulged in discussion and debates. Self-analysis and introspection were my guide.

With a view to devoting more time to prayer and meditation, I moved to the Swargashram. I lived in a small Kutir, 8 feet by 10 feet, with a small verandah in front, and depended on the Kali Kambli-wala Kshetra for my food. Now the Kutir is numbered as 111 with some additional rooms by its side. I continued my Sadhana and service to the sick persons of the place. Just for an hour daily, I used to go from Kutir to Kutir to attend to the sick Mahat-



mas, enquire about their welfare and supply their requirements. I spent much of my time in meditation and practised various kinds of Yogas in my Sadhana, and my experiences have all come out in many of my publications as advice to aspirants. I quickly sent out my thoughts and experiences to help the world and struggling seekers after Truth. It was usual for even great Mahatmas to keep their rare knowledge as a secret and teach only a chosen few.

### HOW I SET AN EXAMPLE

I always loved silent Sadhana in seclusion. During the day for a short period I would write some articles and letters to thirsty aspirants. I did not use a kerosene light, nor did I work at night at any time. I used to come out of my Kutir just for an hour in the morning to serve the sick people with medicine, for a brisk walk in the compound, to bathe in the Ganges and to go to the Kshetra for bringing my food. I never indulged in loose talks with friends. When I went to the Kshetra, I observed Mouna. To avoid people, I used to walk through a small foot-path through the jungle. While walking to the Kshetra, I combined deep breathing exercises and mental Japa.

Even before donkeys and other animals, I do mental prostrations. To my disciples and devotees, I first do Namaskara. I behold the Essence behind all names and forms. That is real Vedanta in daily life.

I never said or did anything to tempt people with promises of grand results like Mukti from a drop of Kamandalu water or Samadhi by a mere touch. I emphasised the importance of silent Sadhana, Japa and meditation for a systematic progress in the spiritual path. Invariably I asked all aspi-

rants to purify the heart through selfless service to mankind.

### GUIDING THE STEPS OF NEOPHYTES

From 1930, many earnest students with a burning desire to devote their lives to spiritual pursuits came to me for guidance. I had also a burning desire to serve the world. Those were the days when Sadhus and Mahatmas lived in peculiar, pitiable conditions—without necessary comforts and conveniences and proper guidance for spiritual evolution. Many tortured the body in the hot sun and in the Himalayan cold. Some were addicted to intoxicating drinks to induce the so-called Samadhi.

With a view to training a band of Sannyasins and Yogins on the right lines, I permitted some aspirants to live in the adjacent Kutirs. I arranged for their meals from the Kshetra and gave them initiation. I arranged all comforts and conveniences for them. I encouraged them and infused Vairagya in them. I took special care of their health. I frequently enquired about their Sadhana and gave useful hints for the removal of their difficulties and obstacles in their meditation. When they offered their services to me, I asked them to go from Kutir to Kutir and find out the old and sick Mahatmas and serve them with Bhakti and Sraddha by bringing food for them from the Kshetra and massaging their legs and washing their clothes.

I asked some educated students to take copies of my short articles and send them to magazines and News-papers for publication, and devote their time to study, Japa and meditation. They all took great pleasure in copying out my articles, as they all contained the essence of the teachings of all sages and saints, and a clear commen-

tary on the difficult portions of the Upanishads and the Gita. My articles contained practical lessons for controlling the turbulent senses and fluctuation of the mind.

Instead of studying the ancient sacred scriptures for decades, the students spent a few minutes daily in making copies of my articles and thereby learnt Yoga and philosophy easily in a short period. I closely observed their faces to see if they liked the work and then carefully selected matter suited to their taste and temperament and entrusted them with the work. Sometimes I had to do the whole work. I love the students. Unasked, I attended to their needs.

In the case of old persons who had no ties in the world, I welcomed them and encouraged them in carrying on their Sadhana and asked them to take bath in the Ganga and do plenty of Japa and Sravana. I danced in joy when I saw peace and bliss in their face. Thus more and more aspirants came to me, and the Swargashram management could not maintain the increasing number of seekers after Truth. I loved the place and enjoyed the peace, but in the interest of the spiritual uplift of a large number of educated Sadhaks, I decided to leave the Swargashram.

### PLANTING OF THE ACORN SAPLING

Planning and scheming were not in my nature. I depend on the grace of the Lord. I had decided to leave Swargashram. Where was I to go? That was a great problem. For some days, I stayed in a small room at the Rama Ashram Library. A few of my students lived in a small Dharmshala nearby and depended on the Kshetra for their meals. For some days I too went to the Kshetra for my Bhiksha. To save time,

I received my Bhiksha through an elderly Sadhu from the Kshetra. Thus months passed.

Then I found a small Kutir in a dilapidated condition nearby. That was improved a bit by fixing doors and windows. I occupied the place and lived there for a period of over 8 years. I could have easily set up some thatched cottages in the jungle. That was not suitable for dynamic work. Books and papers might get damaged by white-ants. I saw a series of rooms in a Dharmshala used by a shop keeper as a cow-shed. These rooms had no doors. Gradually, one by one, all the rooms were converted into residential quarters for the students.

When devotees gave me some money for my personal use, I utilised it in printing leaflets like "Twenty Important Spiritual Instructions", "Way to Peace and Bliss", "Forty Golden Precepts" and other pamphlets, and gave them to visitors. I utilised the money in purchasing some useful medicines for the treatment of sick Mahatmas and for postage to send articles to newspapers and letters to thirsty aspirants. The work grew in a steady pace. I did not go out in search of students.

True seekers of Truth came to me in large numbers seeking my help and guidance. They all received initiation from me and lived in the adjacent rooms of the Dharmshala and worked day and night. To meet the heavy rush of work, I got a duplicator and a typewriter. People evinced great interest in the divine service done for the spiritual uplift of the world. I admired their devotion to me. In work, they forget their past and plunged themselves in attaining evolution through service and Sadhana. Devotees gave me voluntary contributions for the noble cause. For the maintenance



of the students, I received dry rations for five persons from the Kalikambliwala Kshetra at Rishikesh. For the rest of the students and the visitors I utilised the meagre donation received from a few admirers. That enabled me to publish some books also for sale.

With the arrival of new and able hands, I started various fields of activities suited to their taste and temperament. I found out the talents and hidden faculties in them and encouraged them to a great extent. Then a small kitchen was started to provide food for the hard workers, the visitors and the helpless, who could not get Bhiksha from the Kshetra. I maintained various kinds of addresses—of devotees, High Schools, Libraries, donors and aspirants for the Sannyasa line (Nivritti Marga) and sent my books periodically for dissemination of knowledge. The addresses were well-classified under several headings for easy reference.

### THE CRITICAL JUNCTURE

Students became irreligious,  
They lost faith in religion,  
Under the influence of Science,  
They neglected Dharma,  
They began to smoke and gamble,  
Girls became fashionable,  
Officers became materialists,  
Health of people deteriorated,  
People shunned the scriptures,  
Materialism had its sway.

At this critical juncture,  
To revive the Glory of the Lord,  
To disseminate knowledge of Yoga,  
To preach the Yoga of synthesis,  
To instil devotion and faith in people,  
To work for spiritual uplift of mankind,  
To bring peace and bliss to every home,  
I established the Divine Life Mission,

And founded the Yoga-Vedanta Forest  
Academy,  
In a sacred, charming spot in the Himalayas,  
On the banks of the Holy Ganges in  
Rishikesh.

When man gets entangled in selfishness, greed, lust, passion, he naturally forgets all about God. He always thinks of his body, family and children. He constantly attends to his food, drink, comforts and conveniences. He is drowned in the ocean of Sam-sara. Materialism and scepticism reign supreme. He gets irritated by little things and begins to fight. There is restlessness, misery, panic and chaos everywhere. Now the whole world seems to be in the grip of materialism. The invention of new kinds of bombs causes terror everywhere. People have lost faith in holy scriptures and the teachings of the sages and saints. People have become irreligious owing to wrong education and evil influences.

The stirring events since the advent of the twentieth century did not fail to have their effect upon all spiritual-minded people, Sannyasins, saints and men-of-God. The horrors of world wars moved them greatly. The fateful epidemic and the world-wide depression that followed it, touched their compassionate heart. They saw that the sufferings of mankind were mostly brought on by its own deeds. To awaken man to his errors and follies and to make him mend his ways so that he may enthusiastically utilise his life for attaining worthier ends, was felt to be the urgent need of the age.

Millions were eagerly looking for such guidance. This silent prayer was heard and I saw the birth of the Divine Life Mission with its task of rescuing man from the forces of bestiality and brutality and divinising his life upon this planet.



### THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY

Just at this critical juncture, I started the Divine Life Society in 1936. Now people consider it a blessing to the world. It has as its basis the quintessence of the teachings of all religions and of all saints and prophets of the world. Its principles are broad, universal, all-embracing and in accordance with science and reason. It has set for itself the task of raising man above the sorrows and miseries of this mundane life by making him see the Blissful Divinity that is hidden behind all outward forms.

Good thoughts pervade and influence all good people. The thought-currents generated by the Divine Life Movement have had their effect upon the people of Europe and America, and now there is a great thirst for peace all over the world. Millions dread the speedy termination of the race by nuclear weapons.

The Divine Life Society is an all-embracing and all-inclusive Institution; its objects, ideals and aims are very broad and universal. It does not condemn any of the principles or tenets of any cult. It includes all the fundamental principles of all religions and cults. There are no pet dogmas or sectarian tenets. It leads people to the spiritual path. It enables people to take easily to the Divine Life even while living in the world and following the teachings of some particular cult or religion.

The Society has brought about a vigorous awakening throughout the world and has contributed much to a new life of freedom in action, a life of harmony amidst worldly turmoils and a life of bliss through mental non-attachment and mental renunciation of desires, egoism and mine-ness. There is universal appreciation of the principles,

aims, ideals of the society and the method of its work. It lays great stress on the practical side of Sadhana. It expounds in a rational and scientific manner the Yoga of Synthesis. Members belonging to various institutions and organisations in all parts of the world become members of the Divine Life Society and write to me for spiritual guidance. I take special care of them and give them lessons through post for their spiritual progress and welfare. The Divine Life Society proclaims that any man can attain Wisdom in his own station of life, be he a Brahmachari, Grihastha, Vanaprastha or Sannyasi, be he a scavenger, Brahmin, Sudra or Kshatriya, be he a busy man of the world or a silent Sadhak of the Himalayas. Divine Knowledge is not the sole property of Sannyasins, recluses.

It explains how although the central basis is Jnana Yoga, Vedanta, it is necessary for one to practise Karma Yoga for purification of mind and heart; Hatha Yoga to keep good health and strength and purify the Prana and steady the mind; Raja Yoga to destroy the Sankalpas and induce concentration in meditation; and Jnana Yoga to remove the veil of ignorance and ultimately rest in one's own Satchidananda Svaroop.

### THE SIVANANDA ASHRAM

Thirsty aspirants in all parts of the world receive guidance through post. Many foreigners come to the Ashram and spend some weeks or months and admire the wonderful work turned out at the Ashram. The inhabitants of Sivanandanagar, young and old, men and women, enjoy the peace and bliss of this Holy Centre and help the world in a variety of ways. They all receive my careful, personal attention. I pro-

vide them with all comforts and conveniences and help them in their evolution.

The Ashram is now in a position to maintain about 400 persons, learned and cultured scholars, Mahatmas, Yogins, devotees, poor people and the sick, not to mention the school students of the neighbouring villages.

Leaders and followers of other religions and cults also come and stay at the Ashram

and find this an ideal centre—a common platform—to serve the world. I see before me a huge Spiritual Colony with Joy and Bliss in the face of every resident. People come with many motives (such as attaining material and spiritual benefits) and they are all stunned to have their wishes fulfilled in a large measure. Glory to the Lord for bestowing this Ideal Centre for all types of seekers after Truth.

## The Divine Life Society

### THE MASTER'S MISSION FULFILLED

The Divine Life Society was founded by the saint and sage, H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, in the year 1936 with the aims of a world-wide dissemination of spiritual knowledge and service of mankind. The free distribution of spiritual literature drew a steady flow of disciples to Sri Swamiji. With the getting of able hands, he started the various departments of the Society to provide suitable fields of activity for the purification of their hearts and to grow spiritually. The publication of the monthly journal, 'The Divine Life', was commenced in September 1938, to coincide with the celebration of his birthday. The world was in the grip of the 2nd world-war and in order to release a continuous stream of peace-current in the whole world, to help the distressed minds of the people, he started the *Akhanda Mahamantra Kirtan* (non-stop chanting of the Mantra round-the-clock) on the 3rd of December 1943, and also instituted the Lord Sri Visvanath Mandir with three-time regular worship, daily, on the 31st December 1943.

Swami Sivananda believed in synthesis

in everything, in Yoga as well as in the alleviation of human suffering. The Allopathic treatment was inseparable from him and the Society, even from the earliest days of his life at Swargashram. He now felt the need to serve the people with the genuine Ayurvedic preparations out of the rare Himalayan herbs. He therefore instituted the Sivananda Ayurvedic Pharmacy in 1945, which now has grown to such an extent that it is even unable to cope up with the increasing demands from people.

Swami Sivananda organised the All-World Religions' Federation on the 28th December 1945 and established the All-World Sadhus' Federation on 19th February 1947. The year 1947 saw a great expansion in the activities of the Society. It was the year of the Diamond Jubilee of the Great Soul, when a number of buildings sprang up. The Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy was established in the year 1948 to give a systematic spiritual training to the resident Sadhaks, and also to benefit the visiting seekers.

Swami Sivananda undertook a light-



ing All-India and Ceylon tour in 1950 to deliver his divine message throughout the length and breadth of the country. He virtually awakened the moral and spiritual consciousness in the hearts of the people. The effect was tremendous. Since then there was an incessant flow of seeking souls to the Ashram, as also a greater inflow of letters from aspirants from the entire country, which demanded more intense dissemination of knowledge. The Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy Press was established in September 1951, a powerful means of wide dissemination of knowledge. Sri Swamiji convened the World Parliament of Religions in 1953, at the Sivanandashram.

The small dispensary that was inseparable from Swami Sivananda, grew slowly and became a regular Hospital with X-Ray and other facilities. The Sivananda Eye Hospital was formally opened in December 1957. The Hospital has 20 beds for in-patients.

The Publication League had published almost all the writings of the Master and a need was felt by his disciples to do research in his works. This gave rise to the establishment of the Sivananda Literature Research Institute in 1958, which, among many things, decided to get the works of the Master translated and published systematically in all the regional languages in India. Thus the Sivananda Literature Dissemination Committee was established in 1959 which has Regional Committees for each regional language. Swami Sivananda, thus, saw the fulfilment of his Mission in his own lifetime, before he attained Mahasamadhi in 1963.

#### AFTER THE MASTER'S PASSING

Sivananda's spirit continues to guide the noble work initiated by him, which is

gathering momentum with every passing day. Senior monks of the Divine Life Society under the leadership of their present President Sri Swami Chidananda, continue to work ever more vigorously for the spread of the Divine Life Gospel, summed up by the Master in six succinct words: "Serve, Love, Give, Purify, Meditate, Realise."

*Sivananda Ashram*, The Headquarters of The Divine Life Society, are housed at Shivanandanagar, on the banks of the Ganga, at a distance of 3 kilometres from Rishikesh Town, (Distt. Tehri-Garhwal, U.P., India), and served by Tongas (horse-cabs) and taxis. Rishikesh is about 24 kilometres from the renowned pilgrim centre, Haridwar, and is linked by rail and road. Regular buses and taxis are available throughout the day, at any time. Haridwar is situated on the banks of the river Ganga at a distance of 263 kilometres to the north of Delhi (Capital of India), and is served by rail and road. Haridwar Railway Station is on the Delhi-Dehra Dun line.

Anyone devoted to the ideals of truth, non-violence and purity can become a member of the Divine Life Society which is a non-sectarian Institution, embodying in its wide perspective the common fundamental principles of all the religions of the world, and of spiritual life in general. The Society accords equal place of honour to all faiths and religious traditions, and its members recognise no distinction or disruptive sentiment on account of each other's different traditional background, or religious affiliation, all which the principles and the philosophy and teachings of the Society do integrate. Through the pages of the various Books and Journals of the Society, what is endeavoured is to reveal the secret of spiri-



tual action, namely that it lies in the Knowledge of the true Self and in the effacement and transcendence of the ego; and to present Sri Swami Sivananda's profound teachings that each soul is potentially Divine and that everyone's goal is to strive to manifest this Divinity within by controlling the internal and external nature by '*being good and doing good*'. Anyone with the above ideals is welcome to become a member of the Divine Life Society.

The Divine Life Society has been a pioneer in advocating and popularising health, culture and physical fitness through daily practice of Yoga Asanas and Surya-Namaskara among the students and youth of India. This health-building work it has been doing through the length and breadth of India, from Rishikesh to Kanyakumari, and from Assam to the Punjab, since the past about forty years. The Founder Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj had commenced this valuable Yoga work even before. His world-wide Yoga practice movement was one of the earliest movements in this direction.

The organisation and spiritual work of this Society being entirely non-sectarian, non-denominational and fully tolerant in its nature, it has a cementing factor amongst the people of this country. The Ashram has drawn its residents from all provinces in India. Its Branch Centres are to be found throughout the country and their spiritual work fosters tolerance and encourages national unity.

The Institution propagates unity of religions and goodwill among the communities. Almost all its annual Conferences, at State level as well as All-India level, feature one or two sessions as All-Religions-Meet or *Sarva-Dharma-Sammelana*. Thus, its work is intended to function as a constructive

force promoting goodwill and harmony and peaceful relationship in India's society.

This Society's spiritual teachers in foreign countries have been welcomed everywhere as the country's cultural and spiritual ambassadors of goodwill, who have endeared themselves to countless people by their sincerity and their service in the field of Yoga.

The vast goodwill thus earned for India and its spiritual science (*Adhyatma-vidya*) is an invisible and yet a tangible asset whose value cannot be easily estimated. This good work is spreading progressively all over the world.

Even long before any of our present-day teachers had started to go abroad, Swami Sivanandaji's spiritual teachings and Yoga literature had made such a powerful impact in other countries during this recent era that it had raised the name and the prestige of our nation and its culture to very great heights in the eyes of the educated peoples of numerous foreign countries the world over. His Yoga works were very eagerly translated into French, German, Latvian, Estonian, Italian, Danish and Spanish languages, with the earnest objective of bringing about the widest possible spread of our country's most precious spiritual heritage. The dignity and eagerness of the country's cultural heritage has obviously risen high in the eyes of the peoples of other nations by this Institution's work.

A perusal of the spiritual teachings and a careful examination of the work of the Institution can make it evident that it has been propagating practices and indirectly working for targets for which the Government itself is now working and striving through various means and methods. Aims and goals such as national health and physical fitness, integrity of character, dutiful-

ness and discipline, avoidance of wastage, limitation of family size, simplicity and thrift have been directly propagated and taught to people by this Institution from the time of its most revered Founder, who was known throughout India as one of the foremost spiritual leaders of his time and an illustrious well-wisher of the country, its people and its culture.

About a hundred or more deserving students of Uttar Pradesh, most of them from the very poor and backward District of Tehri-Garhwal, are receiving regular educational aid from the Institution for their school and college studies. In addition to their fees, the Institution helps them for their text-books as well as for their school uniforms and clothes. Besides this, the Ashram sometimes gives aid to poor and deserving schools nearby to help them out of their monetary problems and difficulties.

On the health and medical side, the Society, besides its regular year-round free medical service rendered to the public through the Ashram's Hospital, has conducted (a) twenty Eye Camps for free surgical and medical treatment of the public; (b) twenty Annual Women and Children's Medical Treatment Camps; (c) three First Aid Training Courses; and (d) a few Child and Maternity Welfare (prenatal) Camps and food and nutrition education exhibition. Such medical relief and service activities are carried on by a number of its Branches in different parts of India.

The Divine Life Society has reclaimed from the streets a large number of leper beggars and is providing for their maintenance in their own settlements. These leprosy patients have thus stopped begging on the streets since some years past and improved their general health. Medical care

is provided to them. Also periodical repairs to their hutments and supply of clothes are made to them. In addition to this humanitarian Social Welfare project, the Society also bears a major part of the financial burden of running another leprosy colony (Kushtha Ashram) of more than 120 leprosy patients since the past many years. The Institution has been a regular and un-failing participator in a number of national schemes by contributing appreciably towards Small Savings Fund, National Savings Certificates, Defence Bonds and collection drives undertaken by the Government. It also contributes its share in times of natural calamities like famines, epidemic, flood, etc.

As a centre of revival, propagating and perpetuating the country's invaluable cultural heritage, the Institution's yeoman service is very well-known throughout this nation over the past three decades.

The Headquarters-Ashram has ever tried to be a haven of refuge for persons in distress, disappointment, grief, dejection, friendlessness and despair. The grieving and the sorrowful, the agitated and the confused come here for peace and solace. Such people rest and recover in this place and return in a better condition to face their problems and situations. No distressed person is ever turned away without assistance. No hungry person is ever refused a meal at the Ashram's kitchen. No shelterless person is ever turned away without night's shelter here. Through the years men and women, old and young, high and low, all come to this Institution on the banks of the Ganga, by the highway to the Himalayan shrines, seeking to fulfil some inner want, some indefinable need. In the name of the Almighty, the Institution strives to fulfil in some measure the inner need of countless



persons. The value and importance to their lives of what they find and receive here is only known to them and can be assessed only by them.

The Divine Life Society has been not only helping and supporting the imparting of education by normal schooling but also imparting education by correspondence. The Society is conducting classes on Yoga, Vedanta and Indian Culture in general, including classes in Sanskrit language, music, physical culture, etc., regularly, throughout the year. Postal correspondence work is also done on spiritual and cultural subjects, as well as themes of humanitarian service. Further, at periodical intervals, trained Instructors from our Society are invited by the National Academy of Administration in Mussoorie and the Officers Training School, Nainital, to give training in Yoga for the benefit of the officer trainees of the Academy. Thus, IAS Probationers attending the Foundational Course as well as senior officers attending Advance Management Development and Planning course conducted at the National Academy of Administration have undergone training under the able Instructors deputed by the Society. Similar such training courses are conducted in different parts of the country in places like factories, industrial townships, universities like Pantnagar University, the Delhi University, the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, etc. The Divine Life Society's Library contains a very good collection of valuable books on Indian culture, philosophy and religion not only in English and other Indian languages but also in foreign languages. The Library is available for free use by all and a number of students and scholars are regularly visiting the Library and making use of the facilities.

The aim of the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy of this Society is not merely an academic equipment of students, but a providing of the requisite training to enable them in their endeavour to blossom into truly humane, serviceful, integrated personalities, so that they succeed, at least in an appreciable measure, in living a life of goodness and wholeness personally, and of dedication, unselfish cooperation and constructive work socially. It needs no special mention that this achievement in one's own person and in society is obviously rooted in the extent to which one's practical life is attuned to the Ultimate Reality of the Universe. Philosophical discipline, thus, is the precondition to leading a perfectly sociable, ethical and progressive life of an onward expansion towards the realisation of the Supreme Goal of existence. The Teachers of the Academy will strive to hold aloft this objective set before the students, and are not just instructors in the well-known intellectual sciences. The basic spiritual foundation of all life is the principal motif governing the curriculum of the Academy, and students with this elevated spirit of quest seek admission.

Every year the Society also conducts intensive training camps in which people from all walks of life from every region, irrespective of caste, colour or creed take part. During this period, intensive training on Yogasanas, Pranayama and meditation is given to the participants. During the morning and evening sessions, instructive and illuminating discourses on the theory and practice of leading a spiritual life with a view to develop the integrated personality of man even while attending to the normal duties in one's respective walks in life are given. The printing and publication section is only intended for carrying



out the educational programme in building character and all-round development of the personality so as to bring out the nobler qualities inherent in all human beings. A substantial output of the publication section is distributed free to those who are interested in undergoing physical as well as mental discipline and extending the frontiers of their knowledge.

By way of medical relief, the Society is running (1) an Allopathic Section, (2) an Ayurvedic Section, and (3) Leprosy Relief Section, and also arranging free medical relief camps in and around Rishikesh, the Headquarters of the Society. The Allopathic Section is equipped with a laboratory, X-ray machine and the Physio-Therapy Section has facilities for ultra-short wave diathermy, infra-red and ultra-violet therapy. The hospital has 20 beds and more than 29,000 patients were treated during the year 1986. Treatment in all departments is free to all, irrespective of caste or religion. In the Ayurvedic Section, medicines are prepared strictly according to the injunctions contained in the science of Ayurveda and such medicines are distributed free at the dispensary to patients who seek treatment.

It should not be difficult to appreciate that all charitable activities and service to humanity, particularly service to the poor and the sick flows from the conviction in a Transcendent Presence which holds humanity together as a single fraternity. In India, as in other parts of the world, all true charitable activities are carried on with a spiritual zeal which oversteps the boundaries of classes, creeds and cults. The Divine Life Society is religious if by religion we are to understand the grounding of one's life in the structure of a Cosmic Reality. But, no one, definitely, we hope, would be

prepared to abrogate the need for such a religion, if religion is the name we prefer to give to it. It is, rather, the Science of Life, on whose basis this Society has always been working ever since its inception. It attempts to make man human to enable him to live at peace with himself and the Society at large. It lays emphasis on the brotherhood of man to regulate his conduct with his fellow beings and to promote a sense of unity among things. The Divine Life Society is essentially a Charitable Institution and its main object is education, spread of knowledge, promotion of cultural progress, medical relief and relief of the poor. The fact that the workers engaged in carrying out the objectives of the Society have faith in a Super-Power that guides the destinies of men and believe that the ultimate goal of human endeavour should be to realise and experience oneness with that Power, would only adumbrate the integral approach of the Society as a whole.

Religion, to the Divine Life Society, does not mean any particular faith, creed or cult, or any 'ism' in the sense it is usually construed with relevance to the organised, the traditional or the accepted religions of the world. To this Institution, and to all its followers, religion means that consciousness or that conduct which manifests in practical life as well as personal demeanour the laws that are supposed to operate behind the working system of the universe. Thus, religion becomes a scientific principle, a philosophical necessity and a spiritual ideal which regulates human life in every field of its activity,—personal, social, national or international. Thus, again, religion becomes an inviolable law of the world as a whole, by which individuals are united into a fraternity or brotherhood in the light of a total culture of humanity which may be

said to be directed towards the achievement of the purpose of human life as such, without any distinction characteristic of the ordinary religions. This feature exemplifies the 'universal nature' of the activities and the aims and objects of the Society.

*The following are the principal departments of The Divine Life Society:*

*The Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy* trains seekers in the knowledge of India's Culture and in the practice of Yoga as a general discipline for personal integration as well as human welfare. *The Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy Press* prints the cultural and spiritual books as well as the journals and other literature of the Society. *The Sivananda Publication League* caters to the public this valuable literature. *The Free Literature Section* distributes freely books and other literature to deserving seekers and aspirants the world over. *The Sivananda Ayurvedic Pharmaceutical Works* manufactures genuine Ayurvedic medicines from pure Himalayan herbs. *The Charitable Hospital* renders free medical service to the public and conducts periodical medical relief camps freely. *The Annapurna Annakshetra*, which is the common kitchen of the Ashram, feeds about 150 permanent residents as well as the daily visiting Sadhakas and guests and pilgrims in varying numbers. *The Guest House* looks to the needs of the many visitors and guests (visiting Sadhakas) who come to the Ashram for spiritual guidance and Yoga training. *The Temples* of worship hold prayers for the peace of the world, conduct regular worship and continue the recitation of the Divine Name throughout the 24 hours of the day, for the welfare of mankind. *The Two Monthly Journals* ('Wisdom Light' in English and 'Divya Jivan Sandesh' in Hindi) consist of articles on sublime philosophy

and provide guidance of topical value to all the seekers and students of Yoga. *The Library* furnishes reading of some of the most precious books in philosophy, Yoga and Culture in general. *The Correspondence Section* provides proper replies to countless queries that come from seekers all over the world in the various walks of life. *The Daily Satsanga* held in the Ashram is a perennial source of inspiration to the souls that seek communion with inner peace. *The Yoga Courses* held in other parts of India, outside the Headquarters, in other Institutions and Organisations, are, again, channels of the much-needed inspiration to students, officials and people in general, which work the Society carries on through its Yoga Instructors who travel for this purpose. *The Divine Life Conferences* held in different places in India have become effective means of mustering in the moral and cultural forces of people and bringing them together for the purpose of achieving individual and social solidarity. *The Cultural Tours* conducted by the senior Swamis of the Ashram have become a by-word to anxious seekers in India as well as in other countries, who are benefited immensely by the teachings, lectures and personal guidance provided by the Swamis travelling for this purpose. *The Personal Guidance* which the senior Swamis at the Headquarters render in a paternal way to hundreds of people coming to the Ashram from the various countries in the world has been ever giving a healing touch to the tension-ridden personalities in society. *The Daily Meditation* sessions are a practical mobilisation of mental and soul-force for a re-construction of the human personality towards the various noble purposes in life. *The Annual Sadhana Weeks* are Spiritual Camps held in the Ashram, to which hundreds flock in eagerness for cultural and spiritual rejuvenation of



their minds and hearts. *The Educational Activities* of the Society consist in helping poor students, about a hundred in number, right from the primary standard to the post-graduate level, by providing them with the requisite facilities in their studies, as a free gesture of the Ashram's goodwill towards the welfare of people. *The Leprosy Relief Work* of the Society is so well-known that it has always been regarded as part and parcel of the love extended by the Society to some 200 or more leper-patients who are rehabilitated and taken care of in a suitable manner. *The Social Service Wing* attends to such services as medical aid to the poor and needy, contribution towards different relief works in the country, and such other gestures of charity as would relieve the sufferings of people, in some measure, from poverty, disease and igno-

rance.

These services and activities of the Ashram are so conceived and conducted that they form a vehicle for the expression of the spiritual aspirations of seekers and become a venue for manifesting in practical life the broad-based inclusive ideal of the Oneness of God, the brotherhood of creation and the immortality of the soul.

The fundamental aims and objects of The Divine Life Society, as a whole, are purely spiritual and cultural, entirely non-sectarian, universally applicable and perfectly tolerant. The Society offers a peaceful haven wherein is provided ample opportunity and actual help for the restoration of peace to the troubled, conflict-ridden and psychologically traumatised personality of the modern man.

## The Role of Spiritual Institutions

(Sri Swami Krishnananda)

A spiritual Institution is a place of training for suitably equipped temperaments and mature minds towards the acquisition of the higher knowledge of human life. This specialised knowledge is not like one of the sciences or the arts taught in modern colleges or universities, among which a student can prefer anyone to the exclusion of others, but it is the central art and science which enables one to recognise the true meaning of life in general. Spiritual life is not one of the ways of living or even one of the stages of life, but that general background of motive and understanding which vitalises all stages and gives life and meaning to every way of

thinking and mode of activity. One cannot live wisely and successfully in the world without adopting the spiritual perspective of the Universe. Spirituality is not worship of the deity in a temple, performance of rituals, following any code of behaviour or conduct, or even the practice of any cult, creed or religion. It is not even faith in God merely, for it rises above even this concept. Spirituality is that comprehensive understanding and envisagement of values, by which the Universe is taken in its totality,—not in bits or parts,—by which its unity is recognised. Not merely this; the aim of spiritual life is the recognition and realisation of this totality of the Universe

as a single omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent Self, or Atman. Obviously, this is a solution to all human ills, and all problems in creation.

The spiritual philosophy makes one the best of any kind,—a farmer becomes the best farmer, a gardener the best gardener, a driver the best driver, a clerk the best clerk, an official the best official, a teacher the best teacher, and so on. The noblest element in a person is brought out by the technique of spiritual living. It is, thus, not a question of option left to people or a theme to be discussed as to whether it is necessary or unnecessary, for it is the only meaning of all existence. The Institutions that teach this science and art of life are the spiritual organisations of the world and their existence is naturally a 'must' for the benefit and the peace, plenty and prosperity of mankind. The Divine Life Society is one such Institution.

The Divine Life Society has been endeavouring to unfold the creative aspect of the Divinity within man. It is, indeed, a remarkable achievement of the Founder, His Holiness Sri Swami Sivananda, who, from the year 1936, has built up the wonderful mansion of 'Divine Life', brick by brick, on the firm foundations of purity, integrity, nobility and magnanimity. The ideals of the Society are lofty, most practical and within the reach of every human being, irrespective of position, caste, colour, country and creed. The Institution caters to the cultural needs of all ranks of people, to whatever class they may belong. Each one can tap whatever suits him the best according to his stature and intellectual or spiritual attainments. There is a physical Ganga flowing by the side of the Ashram, down from the icy regions of the Himalayas, carrying with her the message of the

seers and sages of the past and the present, thus in a way keeping intact the connection between the ancient and the modern and nourishing the body and the mind of the wearied soul in its earthly sojourn. There is also available a *Jnana-Ganga* emanating from the prolific pen of the Great Master, Sri Swami Sivananda, and his direct disciples, whom the Master has chiselled and moulded into his own pattern with the laudable idea of enabling them to continue and further the cause of his lofty mission.

The ideal of 'Divine Life' has its humble beginnings in the building up of a true human being, even as a fine superstructure has its small start in the foundation. As the strength of a building depends on its base which remains silent and invisible, so is the achievement of the Divine Ideal dependent on a strenuous preparation by man, to annihilate the animal in him, to develop the true human nature and to allow it to blossom into Godliness. Thus, there is no Divine Life without one's being, or trying to become, human first, and one cannot claim to be a human being merely because he walks on two legs and talks with his tongue. It is our outlook, our attitude, our behaviour and our dealings with others that go to decide whether we are humans, subhumans, or superhumans. What is our attitude to our fellow-beings, to ourselves and to the Creator? This will decide what we are. Hence the noble Mission of Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj was to bring about the needed transformation in man, to gradually eradicate the animal in him and to unfold the Divinity within to its perfection. This transformation is needed by everyone, universally, and the Society therefore attracts seeking souls from all walks of life and from every country.

The Divine Life Society carries out its



object of a world-wide revival of spirituality through publication of books, pamphlets and journals dealing scientifically with all the aspects of Yoga and Vedanta, universal religion, philosophy and culture in general, as well as ancient medicine; holding and arranging cultural and spiritual conferences and discourses; establishing training centres for the practice of Yoga and the revival of true culture; and taking such other steps from time to time as may be necessary for bringing about a quick moral and spiritual regeneration in the world.

The Institution serves as a place of preservation of the ancient traditions and cultural practices that have come down as a time-honoured heritage. It has been built up to serve as a model of many-sided, altruistic activity, an ideal to copy, intended to bring about a complete unfoldment of the human personality, and to reveal the essential blending together of all sides of human nature. The Society also functions as an ideal place of spiritual retreat for the educated citizen of the world, wherein he can renew himself and recreate and refresh his being, physically, mentally, morally and spiritually.

## Some Memorable Dates

### IN SWAMI SIVANANDA'S LIFE AND MISSION

Advent on earth	..	8.9.1887	All-World Sadhus' Federation		
Embraced Sannyasa	..	1.6.1924	constituted	..	19.2.1947
Settled on the present			The Yoga-Vedanta Forest		
Ashram site	..	17.1.1934	Academy established	..	3.7.1948
Established the Charitable			The Sivananda Art Studio		
Dispensary	..	17.1.1934	opened	..	25.2.1949
Founded The Divine Life			All-India & Ceylon Tour		
Trust Society	..	13.1.1936	commenced	..	9.9.1950
"The Divine Life" Magazine			Dispensary upgraded as		
commenced	..	1.9.1938	General Hospital	..	28.12.1950
The Sivananda Publication			The Yoga-Vedanta Forest		
League established	..	29.1.1939	Academy Press established	..	20.9.1951
The Divine Life Society			World-Parliament of		
registered	..	16.4.1939	Religions held	..	3-5.4.1953
Bhajan Hall opened	..	2.4.1942	The Sivananda Eye Hospital		
Akhanda (non-stop) Kirtan			established	..	1.6.1956
of Maha-Mantra commenced			The Sivananda Mandir consecrated		8.9.1956
in Bhajan Hall	..	3.12.1943	The Sivananda Pillar consecrated		23.5.1958
Visvanath Mandir consecrated		31.12.1943	The Sivananda Literature Research		
The Sivananda Ayurvedic			Institute established	..	8.9.1958
Pharmacy established	..	6.5.1945	The Sivananda Literature Dissemination		
All-World Religions'			Committee formed	..	20.7.1959
Federation constituted	..	28.12.1945	Entered Mahasamadhi	..	14.7.1963

## Aims And Objects Of The Divine Life Society

### THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED

#### *I. To Disseminate Spiritual Knowledge*

(a) By publication of books, pamphlets and magazines dealing with ancient, oriental and occidental philosophy, religion and medicine in the modern scientific manner, and their distribution on such term as may appear expedient to the Board of Trustees;

(b) By propagating the Name of the Lord, and by holding and arranging spiritual discourses and conferences and frequent Sankirtans or spiritual gatherings for singing and glorifying the Name of the Lord;

(c) By establishing training centres or societies for the practice of Yoga, for moral and spiritual Sadhanas and the revival of true culture, to enable aspirants to achieve regeneration through worship, devotion, wisdom, right action and higher meditation with systematic training in Asanas, Pranayama, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi; and

(d) By doing all such acts and things as may be necessary and conducive to the moral, spiritual and cultural uplift of mankind in general and to the attainment of the above-mentioned objects in Bharatavarsha in particular;

#### *II. To Establish and Run Educational Institutions*

On modern lines and on right basic principles and to help deserving students

by granting them refundable and non-refundable scholarships for doing research work in the various branches of existing scriptures and comparative religion, as also to train them to disseminate spiritual knowledge in the most effective manner;

#### *III. To Help Deserving Orphans and Destitutes*

By rendering them such assistance as the Society may deem proper, whether in any individual case or in any particular class of cases;

#### *IV. To Establish and Run Medical Organizations*

Or any other medical institutions and hospitals or dispensaries for the treatment of diseases and dispensing medicines and performing surgical operations, etc., to the poor in particular and to the other public in general, on such terms and in such manner as may be deemed expedient by the Board of Trustees;

#### *V. To Take Such Other Steps from Time to Time*

As may be necessary for effecting a quick and effective moral and spiritual regeneration in the world and in Bharatavarsha in particular.

This Society was registered as a Trust in the year 1936 and has been actively functioning since then to fulfil the above sublime aims and objects in the world.



# The Divine Life Crest



The Crest of the Divine Life Society symbolises the synthesis of the four great paths to God-realisation, viz., Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Raja Yoga and Jnana Yoga. As the Society stands primarily for the propounding of the great system of Yoga in all its methods, it has adopted an insignia which is indicative of *practical spiritual life*. The four mottoes in the Crest, viz., *Serve, Love, Meditate, Realise*, represent these four Yogas, respectively.

In the Crest, the two hands that offer a lotus symbolise the dedication of all action as an humble offering to God, which is the way of Karma Yoga, by which attachment to work is severed and duty is performed with devotion. Also, the firm

grip of the hand over the lotus symbolises that one who is established in Karma Yoga, in its real sense, has within his grip the Yoga of Synthesis, the practice of which is called "Divine Life". The waves of the ocean shown in the Crest represent the sublimated emotions of the devotee on the path of Bhakti Yoga whose affections are transfigured in love of God. The waves of Bhakti surge from the ocean of the devotees' God-loving heart. The petals of the lotus forming the periphery of the Crest represent the path of Raja Yoga by which one gradually transcends all the psychic levels or centres, whose form is akin to that of a lotus. The Chakra or the energy-centre in the middle of the eyebrows is the main operational centre for meditation in Raja Yoga. The rising Sun, with 'OM' in its Centre, represents the dawn of spiritual Wisdom and Realisation of the Atman through the practice of Jnana Yoga. As the system of Raja Yoga combines some aspects of Bhakti and Jnana, the ocean and the rising Sun are shown as enclosed within the lotus.

This is the Integral Symbol of The Divine Life Society.

## Sivananda on 'Peace'—3

If everyone turns to the Supreme peace within, there will be peace everywhere. A glorious new era of peace, amity, love and prosperity can be ushered in, only if the youth of the day is educated in the methods of self-culture. Educate the moral conscience of the public. This will bring lasting world-peace.

# Complete Works of Swami Sivananda

## I. METAPHYSICS

Principal Upanishads, I and II  
 Chhandogya Upanishad  
 Brihadaranyaka Upanishad  
 Essence of Principal Upanishads  
 Upanishad Drama  
 Dialogues from the Upanishads  
 Ten Upanishads  
 Upanishad for Busy People  
 Brahma Sutras, I and II  
 Philosophy and Meditation on OM  
 Srimad Bhagavad Gita  
 Ethics of the Bhagavad Gita  
 Essence of the Gita  
 Gita for the Blind  
 Gita Meditations  
 Sarvagita Sara  
 Jivanmukta Gita  
 Moksha Gita  
 Vedanta in Daily Life  
 Practice of Vedanta  
 Essence of Vedanta  
 First Lessons in Vedanta  
 Jnana Yoga  
 Philosophy of Dreams  
 Sadhana Chatushtaya  
 Yoga-Vedanta Dictionary  
 Vedanta for Beginners  
 Yoga Sara Upanishad

## II. YOGA

Raja Yoga  
 Practice of Yoga  
 Practical Lessons in Yoga  
 Samadhi Yoga  
 Dhyana Yoga  
 Concentration and Meditation  
 Triple Yoga  
 Yoga Maharnava  
 Yoga Samhita

Yoga Teachings  
 Yoga in Daily Life  
 Easy Steps to Yoga  
 Essence of Yoga  
 Yoga for the Modern Man  
 Yoga and Realisation  
 Yoga for the West  
 Conversations on Yoga  
 Yoga, Questions and Answers  
 Yoga-Vedanta Sutras, I and II  
 Yoga of Synthesis  
 Hatha Yoga  
 Kundalini Yoga  
 Tantra, Nada and Kriya Yoga  
 Swara Yoga  
 Yoga Asanas  
 Yogic Home Exercises  
 Science of Pranayama  
 Radiant Health Through Yoga  
 Yogic and Vedantic Sadhana  
 Sadhana  
 Yoga Kundalini Upanishad  
 Necessity for Sannyasa  
 Spiritual Experiences  
 Practice of Bhakti Yoga  
 Essence of Bhakti Yoga  
 Sankirtan Yoga  
 Japa Yoga  
 Narada Bhakti Sutras  
 Yoga Sastra of Siva  
 Practice of Karma Yoga  
 How to Get Vairagya  
 Ananda Gita  
 Amrita Gita  
 Correspondence Courses in Yoga  
 Yoga Way to Peace  
 How Westerners Practise Yoga  
 Bhakti and Sankirtan  
 Yoga Samhita  
 Every Man's Yoga  
 Fourteen Lessons on Raja Yoga



### III. RELIGION

World Parliament of Religions  
 Unity of Religions  
 World's Religions  
 All About Hinduism  
 Hindu Fasts and Festivals  
 Gems of Prayers  
 World Peace  
 God Exists  
 Gospel of Divine Life  
 Lord Krishna, His Lilas and Teachings  
 Lord Siva and His Worship  
 Lord Shanmukha and His Worship  
 Essence of Ramayana  
 Ananda Lahari  
 Devi Mahatmya  
 Mother Ganges  
 Pocket Prayer Book  
 Stotra Pancha Ratna  
 Stotra Chintamani  
 Stotra Ratnamala  
 Pilgrimage to Badri and Kailas  
 Life and Teachings of Lord Jesus  
 Hindu Gods and Goddesses  
 Satsanga and Svadhyaya  
 Idol Worship  
 Guru Tattwa  
 Lord Krishna

### IV. WESTERN PHILOSOPHY

Essays on Philosophy  
 Studies in Western Philosophy

### V. PSYCHOLOGY

Mind, Its Mysteries and Control  
 Conquest of Mind  
 Thought-Power

### VI. ESCHATOLOGY

What Becomes of the Soul After Death

### VII. FINE ARTS

Music As Yoga  
 Inspiring Songs

### VIII. ETHICS

Ethical Teachings  
 Sivananda Smriti  
 How to Cultivate Virtues and  
     Eradicate Vices  
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 Practice of Brahmacharya  
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 Moral and Spiritual Regeneration

### IX. EDUCATION

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 Sure Ways for Success in Life  
     and God-realisation  
 Students' Success in Life  
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 Children's Divine Treasure  
 Education for Perfection  
 True Education

### X. HEALTH

Practice of Ayurveda  
 Home Remedies  
 Practical Household Remedies  
 Bazaar Drugs  
 Practice of Nature Cure  
 Health and Long Life  
 Health and Happiness  
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 Health and Diet  
 Health and Hygiene  
 How to Live Hundred Years  
 Home Physician  
 Massage  
 How to Get Sound Sleep  
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First Aid to the Injured  
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 Constipation, Its Causes and Cure  
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 Care of the Eyes

### XI. SAYINGS

Voice of the Himalayas  
 Waves of Ganga  
 Voice of Sivananda  
 Heart of Sivananda  
 Sayings of Sivananda  
 Select Teachings  
 Perennial Teachings  
 Illuminating Teachings  
 Essence of Teachings  
 Spiritual Treasure  
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 Analects of Sivananda  
 Sermonettes of Sivananda  
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 Light, Power and Wisdom  
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 Easy Path to God-realisation  
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### XII. POEMS

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 Waves of Bliss  
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 Vedanta Jyoti  
 Secret of Self-realisation  
 In the Hours of Communion  
 Science of Reality  
 Joy-Bliss-Immortality  
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 Philosophy and Yoga  
 Jnana Jyoti  
 How to Become Rich  
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 Steps to Self-realisation  
 Temples in India  
 Ashrams and Saints  
 Beauties of Ramayana  
 Sangita Lila Yoga  
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### XIII. EPISTLES

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 Sivananda Vani  
 Sivananda Upanishad  
 Spiritual Awakener  
 Guide to God-realisation  
 Light on Yoga Sadhana  
 Letters That Transform  
 Epistles of Sivananda  
 Sivananda's Letters to Gajanan  
 Siva's Letters to Paramananda  
 Sivananda's Letters to Dr. Chhatrapati



The Cosmic Rays  
Sivananda's Letters to Kumudini Devi

Lectures on Yoga-Vedanta  
Sivananda's Lectures: All-India Tour  
Doon Lectures  
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#### XIV. AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Siva Gita  
Autobiography of Swami Sivananda  
Story of My Tour

Sivananda: Day-to-Day,  
Volumes 1 to 32  
Inspiring Talks of Gurudev Sivananda  
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#### XV. BIOGRAPHY

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#### XVI. STORIES AND DRAMAS

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Philosophical Stories  
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Parables of Sivananda  
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Brahmacharya Drama  
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#### XVII. MESSAGES

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#### XVIII. LECTURES AND DIALOGUES

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Wear a garland of pearls of wisdom

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Bliss Divine  
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Practical Guide for Students of Yoga  
Daily Meditations  
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The Gateway to Bliss  
Guru and Disciple  
Guru Bhakti Yoga  
Sivanandaism  
How to Become a Yogi  
Immortal Teachings  
Sivananda's Elixir  
Know Thyself  
Philosophy of Life  
An Encyclopaedia of Spiritual Knowledge  
Dynamic Spiritual Awakening  
Thus Illumines Swami Sivananda  
Treasure of Teachings  
Sadhana for All  
Path to God Realisation  
Path to Perfection

# A Garland of Sivananda Literature

(Sri Swami Venkatesananda)

(I have woven this beautiful Garland, at once delightful and instructive, out of the very titles of Sri Gurudev's numerous works)

TITLES OF SRI GURUDEV'S WORKS ARE PRINTED IN THESE TYPES.

Now listen to the SIVANANDA VANI, SIVANANDA'S TEACHINGS, the cream of PHILOSOPHY AND YOGA!

WORDS OF ANCIENT WISDOM or the SAYINGS OF SWAMI SIVANANDA are WISDOM SPARKS, the ILLUMINATING MESSAGES which provide you RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.

"ACHIEVE THE LIFE'S GOAL", SO SAYS SIVANANDA. The HEART OF SIVANANDA is revealed in his SATSANG BHAVAN LECTURES. He gives SURE WAYS FOR SUCCESS IN LIFE AND GOD-REALISATION in his VOICE OF THE HIMALAYAS. THE GOAL OF LIFE, he declares, is GOD-REALISATION or SELF-REALISATION. The SECRET OF GOD-REALISATION he gives in APHORISMS and PARABLES.

WORLDLY MAN! WAKE UP! Follow the GUIDE TO GOD-REALISATION. Listen to his GOSPEL OF DIVINE LIFE. Enter in YOGA MAHARNAVA. Reach the HIMALAYA JYOTI. Drink the WISDOM NECTAR.

PRACTICE OF BHAKTI YOGA, JAPA YOGA, SANKIRTAN YOGA, PRACTICE OF KARMA YOGA, HATHA YOGA and THE PRACTICE OF BRAHMA-CHARYA, are all AIDS TO GOD-REALISATION.

But, HOW TO GET VAIRAGYA? Understand THE PHILOSOPHY OF DREAMS. Reflect over WHAT BECOMES OF THE SOUL AFTER DEATH.

Sing SANGITA BHAGAVATH. Study, SAMADHI YOGA. Practise JNANA YOGA. Know the SECRET OF SELF-REALISATION. Offer your DIVINE LIFE as SHRADDHANJALI unto the

Lord. This is the EASY PATH TO GOD-REALISATION.

Ensure HEALTH AND HAPPINESS by the practice of YOGA ASANAS or YOGIC HOME EXERCISES. Understand well the SCIENCE OF PRANAYAMA.

Be your own FAMILY DOCTOR. Study HEALTH AND HYGIENE; learn HOME NURSING and FIRST AID TO THE INJURED; understand the relation between HEALTH AND DIET; and use BAZAR DRUGS and HOME REMEDIES: thus become your own HOME PHYSICIAN.

Become an expert in the PRACTICE OF NATURE CURE and in the use of PRACTICAL HOUSEHOLD REMEDIES: and you know everything about CONSTIPATION (ITS CAUSE AND CURE), ASTHMA (ITS CAUSE AND CURE), etc.

Take CARE OF THE EYES.

If you know HOW TO GET SOUND SLEEP and have CONQUEST OF ANGER and CONQUEST OF FEAR, you will be free from BLOOD PRESSURE.

Stick to the ETHICS OF THE BHAGAVAD GITA. GITA is THE UNIVERSAL MOTHER. It is ADHYATMA YOGA SAMHITA.

The ESSENCE OF RAMAYANA, too, is the ETHICAL TEACHINGS contained in it! The BEAUTIES OF RAMAYANA can be understood only by one who believes that GOD EXISTS and who is eager to know ALL ABOUT HINDUISM. To him it is a TREASURE OF TEACHINGS.

Wear a garland of PEARLS OF WISDOM



OR PERENNIAL TEACHINGS. Remember the MORAL LESSONS of saints (SIVANANDA SMRITI). They are fountains of LIGHT, POWER AND WISDOM.

BRAHMACHARYA AND SPIRITUAL LIFE are inseparable. Therefore, practise Brahmacharya and know HOW TO LIVE A HUNDRED YEARS.

Gurudev emphasises the NECESSITY FOR SANNYASA and exhorts us to cultivate SADHANA-CHATUSHTAYA.

Before undertaking the PRACTICE OF YOGA, understand MIND, ITS MYSTERIES AND CONTROL. Wear the VAIRAGYA MALA and swim on the WAVES OF GANGA, the WAVES OF BLISS. Study daily the YOGA KUNDALINI UPANISHAD; practise KUNDALINI YOGA and attain YOGA AND REALISATION. KUNDALINI YOGA gives several SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES, JOY, BLISS AND IMMORTALITY, as well as HEALTH AND LONG LIFE.

RAJA YOGA bestows PSYCHIC INFLUENCE on you. Therefore, study the FOURTEEN LESSONS IN RAJA YOGA and know the PHILOSOPHY AND MEDITATION ON OM. Have DAILY READINGS of a page from GITA MEDITATIONS before your morning practice of CONCENTRATION AND MEDITATION. The JNANA JYOTI will illumine your PATH TO PERFECTION. SIVANANDA UPANISHAD is good for PRACTICAL MEDITATION.

A thorough understanding of the SCIENCE OF REALITY will ensure the STUDENTS' SUCCESS IN LIFE. Gurudev's LECTURES ON YOGA AND VEDANTA are the SADHAK'S GUIDE. They are EASY STEPS TO YOGA and contain THE ESSENCE OF VEDANTA.

SIVANANDA'S ALL-INDIA TOUR LECTURES, RADIO TALKS and DOON LECTURES echo the VOICE OF SIVANANDA and have effected a DYNAMIC SPIRITUAL AWAKENING, we are assured in his "STORY OF MY TOUR". His

INSPIRING MESSAGES have gone round the world. His TELEGRAPHIC TEACHINGS have thrilled thousands. His FIRST LESSONS IN VEDANTA represent the ESSENCE OF TEACHINGS of all sages. SIVA GITA or SIVANANDA'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY reveals the WISDOM OF SIVA and gives YOGIC AND VEDANTIC SADHANA in a nutshell. The PRINCIPAL UPANISHADS (including BRIHADARANYAKA UPANISHAD and CHHANDOGYA UPANISHAD), MINOR UPANISHADS, BRAHMA SUTRAS, MOKSHA GITA, ANANDA GITA and JIVANMUKTA GITA, throw a flood of LIGHT ON YOGA SADHANA. "TEN UPANISHADS" is VEDANTA JYOTI: it is WISDOM EYE-OPENER.

Through REVELATION, attain WISDOM OF THE UPANISHADS; then work for WORLD PEACE.

If you want to taste the BHAKTI RAS-AMRITAM (ESSENCE OF BHAKTI YOGA), take to BHAKTI AND SANKIRTAN, recite STOTRA RATNAMALA, STOTRA PANCHARATNA, SANGITA LILA YOGA, ANANDA LAHARI and DEVI MAHATMYA, and emulate RADHA'S PREM or ST. ALAVANDAR. Recognise MUSIC AS YOGA; sing INSPIRING SONGS AND KIRTANS, before your DAILY MEDITATION.

The LIVES OF GREAT MEN AND WOMEN are the LIGHT DIVINE that illumine your PATH TO GOD-REALISATION, leading to PEACE AND PERFECTION. The LIVES OF SIXTY-THREE NAYANARS are not merely ILLUMINATING STORIES but an illustration of NARADA BHAKTI SUTRAS: and their ILLUMINATING, IMMORTAL TEACHINGS are so many STEPS TO SELF-REALISATION.

Visit the ASHRAMS AND SAINTS as also the TEMPLES OF INDIA; undertake a PILGRIMAGE TO BADRI AND KAILAS. Carry a POCKET PRAYER BOOK wherever you go. Be devoted to LORD SIVA AND HIS WORSHIP, or to LORD SHANMUKHA AND HIS WORSHIP.

the GURUDEV'S ADVICE TO WOMEN is that they should go forward to IDEAL WOMANHOOD and should be familiar with HINDU FASTS AND FESTIVALS. They should prescribe DIVINE LIFE FOR CHILDREN. Teach their children GEMS OF PROVERBS, DIVINE STORIES, SPIRITUAL STORIES AND PHILOSOPHICAL STORIES. Early in life the children should be given SPIRITUAL LESSONS AND PRACTICAL LESSONS IN YOGA. The LIVES OF SAINTS AND SAGES should be their ideal. **THAT IS THE THREE DHARMA SHORT ATIG ATUMUNAVIL DND ATIG ADANA** Bequeath YOGA TEACHINGS as your CHILDREN'S DIVINE TREASURE.

Hindu children should be taught all about LORD KRISHNA, HIS LILAS AND TEACHINGS. Christian children should be acquainted with LORD JESUS, HIS LIFE AND TEACHINGS.

EDUCATION FOR PERFECTION must teach students HOW TO CULTIVATE VIRTUES AND ERADICATE VICES, not only HOW TO BECOME RICH and should tend towards MORAL AND SPIRITUAL REGENERATION OF THE WORLD.

The YOGA OF SYNTHESIS is the YOGA FOR THE MODERN MAN. Narrate SIVA LILAS, STORIES FROM MAHABHARATA, STORIES FROM YOGA VASISHTA. Hold classes in UPANISHADS FOR LAYMEN and BUSY PEOPLE. Keep the YOGA-VEDANTA DICTIONARY by your side. Discourse on BHAGAVAD GITA - initiate only fit people into SWARA YOGA, TANTRA YOGA, NADA YOGA AND KRYIA YOGA. Teach SURYA NAMASKAR to all. Practice and preach TRIPURI YOGA. Enact the UPANISHAD DRAMA OF BRAHMA VIDYA. Nominate the DIALOGUES FROM UPANISHADS. When you teach VEDANTA FOR BEGINNERS, emphasise VEDANTA

the TEMPLES OF INDIA; undertake a PILGRIMAGE TO BADRI AND KAILAS. Carry a PRAYER BOOK wherever you go. Be devoted to LORD SIVA AND HIS WORSHIP, or LORD SHANMUKHA AND HIS WORSHIP.

IN DAILY LIFE. Daily offer PUSHPAJALI to MOTHER GANGES. (2) Study the MORAL LESSONS OF SHRIMAD BHAGAVAD GITA. They are full of LIGHT AND POWER.

Let your CONVERSATIONS be ON YOGA. Mix (WISDOM) PHILOSOPHY IN HUMOUR. Write ESSAYS IN PHILOSOPHY. Get by heart THE ESSENCE OF ALL GITAS OR THE ESSENCE OF GITA IN POEMS. They contain the ESSENCE OF YOGA. Enact the RAMAYANA DRAMA. You will soon be an ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE.

AYATHSUTAH-ACHANDAS

TO DHYANA YOGA is the YOGA FOR THE WEST. Take to STUDIES IN WESTERN PHILOSOPHY and know HOW WESTERNERS PRACTISE YOGA. Study the fundamentals of WORLD'S RELIGIONS and realise the UNITY OF RELIGIONS.

MAHARSHI SIVANANDA'S YOGA-VEDANTA SUTRAS point out the LIFE DIVINE and are your SPIRITUAL AWAKENER(S) and LIFE-TRANSFORMER(S). INSPIRING LETTERS THAT TRANSFORM men's lives have flowed from GURUJI as his JNANA GANGA, to ALAVANDARAJ, CAJANAN SHARMA, DR. CHHATRAPATI AND PARAMANANDA. They contain the PHILOSOPHY AND TEACHINGS OF SIVANANDA, and are a VALUABLE GUIDE TO ASPIRANTS, in the PRACTICE OF VEDANTA. The SAYINGS OF SWAMI SIVANANDA are his SELECT TEACHINGS - YOUR POCKET GEMST OF VEDANTIC PEARLS.

YOGA PRASNOTTARI means YOGA, QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

These ANECDOTES OF SIVANANDA are NECESSARILY, which contain the ESSENCE OF HINDU UPANISHADS and lead to SELF-KNOWLEDGE. These are PRECEPTS FOR PRACTICE; his MESSAGE TO MANKERNI. THE

SIVANANDA'S ALL-INDIA TOUR LECTURES, RADIO TALKS AND DOON LECTURES echo the VOICE OF SIVANANDA and have effected a DYNAMIC SPIRITUAL AWAKENING, we are assured in his "STORY OF MY TOUR".





**SECTION II**  
**Sivananda**  
**On**  
**Hindu Scriptures**





# The Vedas

## SANSKRIT LITERATURE

Sanskrit literature can be classified under six orthodox heads and four secular heads. The six orthodox sections form the authoritative scriptures of the Hindus. The four secular sections embody the latter developments in classical Sanskrit literature.

The six scriptures are: (i) *Srutis*, (ii) *Smritis*, (iii) *Itihasas*, (iv) *Puranas*, (v) *Agamas* and (vi) *Darsanas*.

The four secular writings are: (i) *Su-bhashitas*, (ii) *Kavyas*, (iii) *Natakas* and (iv) *Alankaras*.

## VEDA—THE REVEALED WISDOM

The *Srutis* are called the Vedas, or the *Amnaya*. The Hindus have received their religion through revelation, the Vedas. These are direct intuitional revelations and are held to be *Apaurusheya* or entirely superhuman, without any author in particular. The Veda is the glorious pride of the Hindus, nay, of the whole world!

The term Veda comes from the root 'Vid', to know. The word Veda means knowledge. When it is applied to scripture, it signifies a book of knowledge. The Vedas are the foundational scriptures of the Hindus. The Veda is the source of the other five sets of scriptures, why, even of the secular and the materialistic. The Veda is the storehouse of Indian wisdom and is a memorable glory which man can never forget till eternity.

The Vedas are the eternal truths revealed by God to the great ancient Rishis of India. The word *Rishi* means a Seer, from *dris*, to see. He is the *Mantra-Drashta*, a seer of Mantra or thought. The thought

was not his own. The Rishis saw the truths or heard them. Therefore, the Vedas are what are heard (*Sruti*). The Rishi did not write. He did not create it out of his mind. He was the seer of thought which existed already. He was only the spiritual discoverer of the thought. He is not the inventor of the Veda.

## THE UNIQUE GLORY OF THE VEDAS

The Vedas represent the spiritual experiences of the Rishis of yore. The Rishi is only a medium or an agent to transmit to people the intuitional experiences which he received. The truths of the Vedas are revelations. All the other religions of the world claim their authority as being delivered by special messengers of God to certain persons, but the Vedas do not owe their authority to any one. They are themselves the authority as they are eternal, as they are the Knowledge of the Lord.

Lord Brahma, the Creator, imparted the divine knowledge to the Rishis or Seers. The Rishis disseminated the knowledge. The Vedic Rishis were great realised persons who had direct intuitive perception of Brahman or the Truth. They were inspired writers. They built a simple, grand and perfect system of religion and philosophy from which the founders and teachers of all other religions have drawn their inspiration.

The Vedas are the oldest books in the library of man. The truths contained in all religions are derived from the Vedas and are ultimately traceable to the Vedas. The Vedas are the fountain-head of religion. The Vedas are the ultimate source to which all religious knowledge can be

traced. Religion is of divine origin. It was revealed by God to man in the earliest times. It is embodied in the Vedas.

The Vedas are eternal. They are without beginning and end. An ignorant man may say how a book can be without beginning or end. By the Vedas, no books are meant. Vedas came out of the breath of the Lord. They are not the composition of any human mind. They were never written, never created. They are eternal and impersonal. The date of the Vedas has never been fixed. It can never be fixed. Vedas are eternal spiritual truths. Vedas are an embodiment of divine knowledge. The books may be destroyed, but the knowledge cannot be destroyed. Knowledge is eternal. In that sense, the Vedas are eternal.

### DIVISIONS OF THE VEDAS

The Veda is divided into four great books: the Rig-Veda, the Yajur-Veda, the Sama-Veda and the Atharva-Veda. The Yajur-Veda is again divided into two parts, the Sukla and the Krishna. The Krishna or the Taittiriya is the older book and the Sukla or the Vajasaneya is a later revelation to sage Yajnavalkya from the resplendent Sun-God.

The Rig-Veda is divided into twenty-one sections, the Yajur-Veda into one hundred and nine sections, the Sama-Veda into one thousand sections and the Atharva-Veda into fifty sections. In all, the whole Veda is thus divided into one thousand one hundred and eighty recensions.

Each Veda consists of four parts: the *Mantra-Samhitas* or hymns, the *Brahmanas* or explanations of Mantras or rituals, the *Aranyakas*, and the *Upanishads*. The division of the Vedas into four parts is to suit the four stages in a man's life.

The Mantra-Samhitas are hymns in praise of the Vedic God for attaining material prosperity here and happiness hereafter. They are metrical poems comprising prayers, hymns and incantations addressed to various deities, both subjective and objective. The Mantra portion of the Vedas is useful for the Brahmacharins.

The Rig-Veda Samhita is the grandest book of the Hindus, the oldest and the best. It is the Great Indian Bible, which no Hindu would forget to adore from the core of his heart. Its style, the language and the tone are most beautiful and mysterious. Its immortal Mantras embody the greatest truths of existence, and it is perhaps the greatest treasure in all the scriptural literature of the world. Its priest is called the *Hotri*.

The Yajur-Veda Samhita is mostly in prose and is meant to be used by the *Adhvaryu*, the Yajur-Vedic priest, for superfluous explanations of the rites in sacrifices, supplementing the Rig-Vedic Mantras.

The Sama-Veda Samhita is mostly borrowed from the Rig-Vedic Samhita, and is meant to be sung by the *Udgatri*, the Sama-Vedic priest, in sacrifices.

The Atharva-Veda Samhita is meant to be used by the *Brahma*, the Atharva-Vedic priest, to correct the mispronunciations and wrong performances that may accidentally be committed by the other three priests of the sacrifice.

The Brahmana portions guide people to perform sacrificial rites. They are prose explanations of the method of using the Mantras in the Yajna or the sacrifice. The Brahmana portion is suitable for the householders.

There are two Brahmanas to the Rig-



Veda—the *Aitareya* and the *Sankhayana*. “The Rig-Veda”, says Max Muller, “is the most ancient book of the world. The sacred hymns of the Brahmanas stand unparalleled in the literature of the whole world; and their preservation might well be called miraculous.”

The Satapatha Brahmana belongs to the Sukla-Yajur-Veda. The Krishna-Yajur-Veda has the Taittiriya and the Maitrayana Brahmanas. The Tandya or Panchavimsa, the Shadvimsa, the Chhandogya, the Adbhuta, the Arsheya and the Upanishad Brahmanas belong to the Sama-Veda. The Brahmana of the Atharva-Veda is called the Gopatha. Each of the Brahmanas has got an Aranyaka.

The Aranyakas are the forest books, the mystical sylvan texts which give philosophical interpretations of the rituals. The Aranyakas are intended for the Vanaprasthas or hermits who prepare themselves for taking Sannyasa.

The Upanishads are the most important portion of the Vedas. The Upanishads contain the essence or the knowledge portion of the Vedas. The philosophy of the Upanishads is sublime, profound, lofty and soul-stirring. The Upanishads speak of the identity of the individual soul and the Supreme Soul. They reveal the most subtle and deep spiritual truths. The Upanishads are useful for the Sannyasins.

The subject matter of the whole Veda is divided into *Karma-Kanda*, *Upasana-*

*Kanda* and *Jnana-Kanda*. The Karma-Kanda or Ritualistic Section deals with various sacrifices and rituals. The Upasana-Kanda or Worship-Section deals with various kinds of worship or meditation. The Jnana-Kanda or Knowledge-Section deals with the highest knowledge of Nirguna Brahman. The Mantras and the Brahmanas constitute Karma-Kanda; the Aranyakas Upasana-Kanda; and the Upanishads Jnana-Kanda.

### THE ESSENCE OF THE VEDAS

Live in the spirit of the teachings of the Vedas. Learn to discriminate between the permanent and the impermanent. Behold the Self in all beings, in all objects. Names and forms are illusory. Therefore sublimate them. Feel that there is nothing but the Self. Share what you have,—physical, mental, moral or spiritual,—with all. Serve the Self in all. Feel when you serve others, that you are serving your own Self. Love thy neighbour as thyself. Melt all illusory differences. Remove all barriers that separate man from man. Mix with all. Embrace all. Destroy the sex-idea and body-idea by constantly thinking of the Self or the sexless, bodiless Atman. Fix the mind on the Self when you work. This is the essence of the teachings of the Vedas and sages of yore. This is real, eternal life in Atman. Put these things in practice in the daily battle of life. You will shine as a dynamic Yogi or a Jivanmukta. There is no doubt of this.

### *Sivananda on 'Peace'—4*

You can elevate others only if you have elevated yourself. This world can be saved only by those who have already saved themselves. A prisoner cannot liberate other prisoners. One realised sage can do more for the promotion of peace than a thousand missionaries preaching and disputing, day in and day out.

# The Upanishads

## A TREASURE OF WISDOM

Prostrations to Satchidananda Parabrahman, who is the prop, basis and source for everything! Salutations to all Brahma-vidya-Gurus or the preceptors of knowledge of Brahman!

There is no book in the whole world that is so thrilling, soul-stirring and inspiring as the Upanishad. The philosophy taught by the Upanishads has been the source of solace for many, both in the East and the West. The human intellect has not been able to conceive of anything more noble and sublime in the history of the world than the teachings of the Upanishads.

The Upanishads contain the essence of the Vedas. They are the concluding portions of the Vedas and are the source of the Vedanta philosophy. Profound, original, lofty and sublime thoughts arise from every verse. They contain the direct spiritual experiences or revelations of seers, or sages, the Rishis. They are the products of the highest wisdom, supreme divine knowledge. Hence they stir the hearts of people and inspire them.

The glory or grandeur of the Upanishads cannot be adequately described in words, because words are finite and language is imperfect. The Upanishads have indeed greatly contributed to the peace and solace of mankind. They are highly elevating and soul-stirring. Millions of aspirants have drawn inspiration and guidance from the Upanishads. They are the cream of the Vedas. They are treasures of incalculable value. They are rich in profound philosophical thought. Their intrinsic value is very great. There is immense depth of

meaning in the passages and verses. The language is beautiful.

The Upanishads give a vivid description of the nature of the Atman, the Supreme Soul, in a variety of ways, and expound suitable methods and aids to attain the Immortal Brahman, the Highest Purusha.

Ages have passed since they were first presented to the world. Even now they are remarkably sweet and charming. Their freshness is unique. Their fragrance is penetrating. Many cannot live today without the study of Upanishads daily. They give supreme food for the soul.

It is said that Schopenhauer, the renowned philosopher of the West, had always a book of the Upanishads on his table, and was in the habit, before going to bed, of performing his devotions from its pages. He said, "In the whole world there is no study so beneficial and so elevating as that of the Upanishads. It has been the solace of my life, it will be the solace of my death."

The Upanishads have undoubtedly exercised and will continue to exercise a considerable influence on the religion and philosophy of India. They present a view of reality which would certainly satisfy the scientific, the philosophic, as well as the religious aspirations of man.

## ORIGIN OF THE UPANISHADS

The Upanishads are metaphysical treatises which are replete with sublime conceptions of Vedanta and with intuitions of universal truths. The Indian Rishis and seers of yore endeavoured to grasp the fundamental truths of being. They tried to



solve the problems of the origin, the nature and the destiny of man and of the universe. They attempted to grasp the meaning and value of *knowing* and *being*. They endeavoured to find a solution for the problems of the means of life and the world and of the relation of the individual to the 'Unseen,' or the Supreme Soul. They sought earnestly satisfactory solution of these profound questions: Who am I? What is this universe or Samsara? Whence are we born? On what do we rest? Where do we go? Is there any such thing as immortality, freedom, perfection, eternal bliss, everlasting peace. Atman, Brahman, or the Self, Supreme Soul, which is birthless, deathless, changeless, self-existent? How to attain Brahman or Immortality?

They practised right living, *Tapas*, introspection, self-analysis, enquiry and meditation on the pure, inner Self and attained Self-realisation. Their intuitions of deep truths are subtle and direct. Their inner experiences, which are direct, first-hand, intuitive and mystical, which no science can impeach, which all philosophies declare as the ultimate goal of their endeavours, are embodied in the sublime books called the Upanishads.

Some Western scholars have fixed the age of the Upanishads as B.C. 600, or so. They regard that all of them belong to the pre-Buddhistic period. This is a sad mistake indeed. The Upanishads are the knowledge portion, or *Jnana-Kanda*, of the Vedas. They are eternal. They came out of the mouth of Hiranyagarbha, or Brahman. How can one fix the date of the Upanishads? They existed even before the creation of this world.

The Upanishads are a source of deep mystic divine knowledge which serves as the means of freedom from this formid-

able Samsara, earthly bondage. They are world-scriptures. They appeal to the lovers of religion and truth in all races, and at all times. They contain profound secrets of Vedanta, or Jnana-Yoga, and practical hints and clues which throw much light on the pathway of Self-realisation.

### SIGNIFICANCE AND IDEAL

Knowledge of the Upanishads destroys ignorance, the seed of Samsara. 'Shad' means to 'shatter' or 'destroy'. By having knowledge of the Upanishads one is able to sit near Brahman, i.e., to attain Self-realisation. Hence the name 'Upanishad'. Knowledge of Brahman is called 'Upanishad', because it leads to Brahman and helps aspirants to attain Brahman. The term 'Upanishad' is applied to the book also in a secondary sense, by courtesy.

The following two ideas dominate the teaching of all the Upanishads: (1) Final emancipation can be attained only by knowledge of the Ultimate Reality, or Brahman (Brahmajnana); (2) He who is equipped with the four means of salvation, viz., *Viveka* (discrimination), *Vairagya* (dispassion), *Shad-Sampat* (the six-fold treasure: self-control, etc.) and *Mumukshutva* (yearning for liberation), can attain Brahman. The Upanishads teach the philosophy of absolute unity.

The goal of men, according to the Upanishads, is realisation of Brahman. Self-realisation alone can dispel ignorance and bestow immortality, eternal bliss, and everlasting peace. Knowledge of Brahman alone can remove all sorrows, delusion and pain.

The Upanishads are rightly called the Vedanta, the end of the Vedas, that which is reserved for those who have freed themselves from the bonds of formal religion.

The Upanishads are not meant for the

masses, as they contain the highest speculations of philosophy. They are meant only for the select few, who are fit and worthy to receive the instructions. Hence the term 'Upanishad' signified at first 'secret teaching' or 'secret doctrine'. As already stated, *Sadhana-Chatusthaya* (the fourfold means)

is the primary qualification of an aspirant of Jnana-Yoga, or one who seeks the knowledge of the Upanishads.

Study the Upanishads systematically. Acquire the four means of salvation. Meditate on the non-dual Atman or Brahman and attain ever-lasting Bliss!

## The Smritis

Next in importance to the *Sruti* are the *Smritis* or secondary scriptures. These are the ancient sacred law-codes of the Hindus dealing with the *Sanatana-Varnasrama-Dharma*. They supplement and explain the ritualistic injunctions called *Vidhis* in the Vedas. The *Smritis* or *Dharma Sastras* are founded on the *Sruti*. The *Smritis* are based on the teachings of the Vedas. The *Smriti* stands next in authority to the *Sruti*. It explains and develops *Dharma*. It lays down the laws which regulate Hindu national, social, family and individual obligations.

The works which are expressly called *Smritis* are the law books, *Dharma Sastras*. *Smriti*, in a broader sense, covers all Hindu *Sastras* save the Vedas.

The laws for regulating Hindu society from time to time are codified in the *Smritis*. The *Smritis* have laid down definite rules and laws to guide the individuals and communities in their daily conduct and to regulate their manners and customs. The *Smritis* have given detailed instructions, according to the conditions of the time, to all classes of men regarding their duties in life.

The Hindu learns how he has to spend his whole life from these *Smritis*. The duties of *Varnasrama* and all ceremonies are

clearly given in these books. The *Smritis* prescribe certain acts and prohibit some others for a Hindu, according to his birth and stage of life. The object of the *Smritis* is to purify the heart of man and take him gradually to the supreme abode of immortality and make him perfect and free.

These *Smritis* have varied from time to time. The injunctions and prohibitions of the *Smritis* are related to the particular social surroundings. As these surroundings and essential conditions of the Hindu society changed from time to time, new *Smritis* had to be compiled by the sages of different ages and different parts of India.

### THE CELEBRATED HINDU LAW-GIVERS

From time to time, a great law-giver would take his birth. He would codify the existing laws and remove those which had become obsolete. He would make some alterations, adaptations, readjustments, additions and subtractions, to suit the needs of the time and see that the way of living of the people would be in accordance with the teachings of the Veda. Of such law-givers, Manu, Yajnavalkya and Parasara are the most celebrated persons. Hindu society is founded on, and governed by, the laws made by these three great sages. The



Smritis are named after them. We have Manu Smriti or Manava Dharma-Sastra (the Laws of Manu or the Institutes of Manu), Yajnavalkya Smriti and Parasara Smriti. Manu is the greatest law-giver of the race. He is the oldest law-giver as well. The Yajnavalkya Smriti is next in importance to it. Manu Smriti and Yajnavalkya Smriti are universally accepted at the present time as authoritative works all over India. Yajnavalkya Smriti is chiefly consulted in all matters of Hindu Law. Even the Government of India is applying some of these laws.

There are eighteen main Smritis or Dharma Sastras. The most important are those of Manu, Yajnavalkya and Parasara. The other fifteen are those of Vishnu, Daksha, Samvarta, Vyasa, Harita, Sata-tapa, Vasishtha, Yama, Apastamba, Gautama, Devala, Sankha-Likhita, Usana, Atri and Saunaka.

The laws of Manu are intended for the Satya Yuga; those of Yajnavalkya are for the Treta Yuga; those of Sankha and Likhita are for the Dvapara Yuga; and those of Parasara are for the Kali Yuga.

The laws and rules which are based entirely upon our social positions, time and clime, must change with the changes in society and changing conditions of time and clime. Then only the progress of the Hindu society can be ensured.

### NEED FOR A NEW LAW-CODE

It is not possible to follow some of the laws of Manu at the present time. We can follow their spirit and not the letter. Society is advancing. When it advances, it outgrows certain laws which were valid and helpful at a particular stage of its growth. Many new things which were not thought out by the old law-givers have come

into existence now. It is no use insisting people to follow now those old laws which have become obsolete.

Our present society has considerably changed. A new Smriti to suit the requirements of this age is very necessary. Another sage will place before the Hindus of our days a new suitable code of laws. Time is ripe for a new Smriti. Cordial greetings to this sage.

### THE SRUTI AND THE SMRITI

The Sruti and the Smriti are the two authoritative sources of Hinduism. *Sruti* literally means what is heard, and *Smriti* means what is remembered. Sruti is revelation and Smriti is tradition. Upanishad is a Sruti. Bhagavad Gita is a Smriti.

Sruti is direct experience. Great Rishis heard the eternal truths of religion and left a record of them for the benefit of posterity. These records constitute the Vedas. Hence, Sruti is primary authority. Smriti is a recollection of that experience. Dharma Sastras also are books written by sages, but they are not the final authority. If there is anything in a Smriti which contradicts the Sruti, the Smriti is to be rejected.

### THE INNER VOICE OF DHARMA

He who is endowed with a pure heart through protracted Tapas, Japa, Kirtan, meditation and service of Guru and who has a very clear conscience, can be guided by the inner voice in matters of Dharma or duty or moral action. The inner voice that proceeds from a clean heart filled with Sattva is, indeed, the voice of God or Soul or Antaryamin or Inner Ruler. This voice is more than Smriti. It is Smriti of Smritis. Purify your heart and train yourself to hear this inner voice. Keep your ear in tune with the 'voice'.

# The Ramayana

## THE ITIHASAS

The Valmiki-Ramayana is one of the four *Itihasas*, the other three being: the Yoga Vasishtha, the Mahabharata and the Harivamsa. The *Itihasas* embody all that is in the Vedas, but only in a simpler manner. These are called the *Suhrit-Sammitas* or the Friendly Treatises, while the Vedas are called the *Prabhu-Sammitas* or the Commanding Treatises with great authority. These works explain the great universal truths in the form of historical narratives, stories and dialogues. These are very interesting volumes and are liked by all, from the inquisitive child to the intellectual scholar.

The *Itihasas* give us beautiful stories of absorbing interest and importance, through which all the fundamental teachings of Hinduism are indelibly impressed on one's mind. The law of *Smritis* and the principles of the Vedas are stamped firmly on the minds of the Hindus through the noble and marvellous deeds of their great national heroes. We get a clear idea of Hinduism from these sublime stories.

The common man cannot comprehend the high abstract philosophy of the *Upanishads* and the *Brahma Sutras*. Hence, the compassionate sages Valmiki and Vyasa wrote the *Itihasas* for the benefit of common people. The same philosophy is presented with analogies and parables in a tasteful form to the common run of mankind.

## VALMIKI RAMAYANA

Salutations to the great Valmiki, Lord Rama and other heroes of the Ramayana,

and Sri Sita Devi, a remembrance of whom removes all obstacles in life and bestows prosperity, auspiciousness and success in all undertakings.

The Ramayana of Valmiki is perhaps the most ancient and glorious epic in the world. It is known as the *Adikavyam*, the first poem.

Valmiki Ramayana contains 24,000 Slokas which have been grouped into 500 chapters and again into seven *Kandas* or sections: *Bala*, *Ayodhya*, *Aranya*, *Kishkindha*, *Sundara*, *Yuddha* and *Uttara Kanda*.

Ramayana is a marvellous book which contains the essence of all the Vedas and all sacred scriptures. It is a treasure for man. It is a reservoir which contains the nectar of immortality. It delineates the character of a son who renounced the throne and the pleasures of the world to fulfil the words of his father and lived in the forest for a period of fourteen years. It depicts the character of a father who sends even his most beloved son into exile in order to keep up his word. It delineates the character of an ideal, chaste wife who is devoted to her husband till the end of her life and shares the adversities of her husband and serves him untiringly in the forest, and who also regards her husband as her God. Above all, it also points the character of a brother, who places brotherly affection above everything else in this world and follows his brother to the forest leaving all the pleasures of the palace, and leading the way to ward off all dangers.

In Sri Rama we find a dutiful son, an ideal husband and king. In Lakshmana we find an ideal brother who shares the joys and sorrows of his eldest brother in city



and forest. Can a Hindu wife have a more nobler exemplar than the peerless Sita? The very names of these great personages produce a holy thrill in the hearts of all those who read the Ramayana. Ramayana, thus, exercises a great moulding power on the lives of people. It contains object lessons for husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, friends and enemies.

Ramayana is highly beautiful, melodious and soul-stirring. It contains genuine classical Sanskrit poetry. Rama's young sons, Kusa and Lava, were the first reciters who sang to music this reputed work. It can be easily understood even by boys. It is suitable for beginners in the study of Sanskrit. It contains the highest ideals of Hindu culture and civilisation. It is a text-book of morals for the youths to inspire them to lofty and sublime ideals of conduct and character.

Ramayana is a book that is studied by all—man, woman or boy in India. The teachings of the sacred book are wrought into the very life of every Indian man, woman and boy. Mothers tell the stories to their children, teachers to their students, the old to the young. It is a non-detailed text-book for students in schools.

The description of *Nature* in the Ramayana is most sublime and beautiful. One can actually feel that the hills, the rivers, the trees and the birds are really one with human joys and sorrows. The description of battle scenes is magnificent. The chief characteristic of the work Ramayana is simplicity. Pathos and tenderness run through the whole poem. Poetry and morality are charmingly united. There is loftiness of moral tone.

Ramayana has historical basis. It is

a book of great antiquity. It is not a mere allegoric poem. It is an inspiring and marvellous book for all times. It has loomed large for centuries over the destinies of many millions of people and will certainly continue to do so for ages to come.

The period at which Sri Rama lived was the closing of Treta Yuga. Dwapara Yuga began when he departed from this world.

Ramayana has been translated, both in verse and prose into Italian, French, English and Latin.

The sage Valmiki taught the Ramayana to his little disciples, Lava and Kusa, who were the first to sing it to the world. They came in the garb of ascetics from the hermitage of their teacher and sang the wonderful poem in the presence of their father and other heroes of the story.

Those who study the Sundara Kanda daily with faith and devotion attain wealth, happiness, sons and prosperity.

### ITS ORIGIN

Valmiki once asked Narada, "O venerable Rishi! Please tell me whether there is a perfect man in this world who is at once virtuous, dutiful, truthful, noble, steadfast in duty and kind to all beings."

Narada replied, "There is such a one, a prince of Ikshwaku's line, named Rama. He is virtuous, brave, gentle and wise. He is a great hero. He loves his subjects immensely. He is the protector of *Dharma*. He is firm and steadfast. He is just and liberal. He is well versed in the Vedas and in the science of arms. He is unique in the possession of virtues and matchless in beauty. He is an obedient son, a kind brother, a loving husband, a faithful friend, an ideal king, a merciful enemy and a lover

of all living beings. All people adore him."

Valmiki, reflecting over this glowing description, was walking along the banks of the river Tamasa. He happened to see a pair of *Krounchas* (birds) sporting with each other in love. Suddenly the male bird was shot dead by a cruel fowler and the female, seeing her mate rolling on the ground in the agony of pain, screamed out pitifully her lamentations. The sage felt great pity at the sight of the fallen bird and his grieving spouse and burst forth in the exclamation: "Never, O fowler, shalt thou obtain rest, as thou hast killed a *Krouncha* in the midst of his love." These words came out spontaneously in the form of a musical verse having four feet of eight syllables each (*Anushtup* metre).

Then Brahma Himself, the creator of the world, came before the poet and said, "Sing Rama's charming story in the same melodious metre. As long as this world endures, as long as the stars shine in heaven, so long shall thy song spread among men." So saying, Brahma vanished. He inspired the poet with the knowledge of Sri Rama's whole story.

Then Valmiki sat down in meditation and saw every event in Sri Rama's story in detail in his Yogic vision. Then he began to write the Ramayana. The melody for the Ramayana was born from the heart of love and pity for the wounded bird. When applied to the Ramayana, the verse of Valmiki, sung out of pity for the *Krouncha*, can be interpreted thus: Sri Rama and Sita represent the two birds; Ravana represents the cruel hunter. Sita was cruelly separated from Rama by the hunter Ravana. There is a slight similarity in both these cases. The hunter's cruel act was a fore-runner to Valmiki's inspiration to narrate the Ramayana.

## ITS CHARACTERS

Sri Rama, the hero of Valmiki's Ramayana is an embodiment of every social and domestic virtue. His sense of filial duty is unparalleled in the history of the world. He was an ideal king and his government was styled as "*Ramarajya*," i.e., an ideal or perfect government. He was an ideal husband and father and a model of all the domestic virtues.

His adherence to duty was remarkable and illustrious. He even abandoned his wife who was his life, heart and soul and sacrificed his personal happiness to ensure the good of his subjects. He was prepared to sacrifice his very life even to secure the contentment of his people and to stick to duty.

Though Rama was the Supreme Being Himself, throughout his life he behaved like an ordinary man, because Ravana had a boon that he could not be killed by any being except a human being. So Sri Rama acted as an ordinary man only.

Sri Rama is known as *Maryada Purushottama*. He adhered to the injunctions of the Shastras. He led the life of an ideal householder to teach the world the *Dharma* of a *Grihastha*. He never swerved an inch from truth and duty.

Sita is the heroine of the Ramayana. She is the ideal of womanhood itself. She never led a life of ease and comfort. She was serene and firm amidst sorrows and trials. She was matchless among women. She was put to very severe tests in which her purity, courage, patience and other virtues were severely tried and she came out nobly successful. She was the Hindu ideal of womanly virtues. She was the most charming picture of feminine excellence. Hindu women have glorious reputa-



tion for their disinterested love and self-sacrifice. Sita was a peerless embodiment of these virtues. She never thought of her own comfort and happiness. She lived to serve Sri Rama and make him happy.

### ESOTERIC SIGNIFICANCE

The vast majority of people do not study Ramayana with faith and reverence, under great souls. They jump to hasty conclusions by mere superficial reading of the Ramayana here and there. They read the epic like reading novels with the attitude of curiosity-mongering and cavilling spirit. That is the reason why they are not able to comprehend the truths, the depths and secrets of the Ramayana.

The allegoric meaning of Ramayana is this: Ravana represents *Ahamkara* or egoism. His ten heads represent the ten senses. The city of Lanka is the nine-gated city of the physical body. Vibhishana represents the intellect. Sita is peace. Rama is Jnana. To kill the ten-headed Ravana is to kill egoism and curb the senses. To recover Sita is to attain peace which the Jiva has lost on account of desires. To attain Jnana is to have Darshan of Rama or the Supreme Self.

He who crosses the ocean of *Moha* and destroys the Rakshasas, *Raga* and *Dwesha* (likes and dislikes), is a Yogi who is united with *Shanti* or peace, ever resting in the Atman and enjoying the eternal bliss of the Soul. He is an Atma-Rama.

Sri Rama stands for the "Good" (*Sat-tva*); Ravana for the "Evil". Sri Rama and Ravana fought with each other. Even-

tually Sri Rama became victorious. Positive always overcomes the negative. Good always overcomes evil.

### GLORY OF WOMEN

In Kali Yuga, most of the people are of devotional nature; they all do some kind of Tapas, Japa, prayer and meditation. Hindu ladies are devotional in their very nature. The Hindu religion is maintained through the devotional nature of the ladies. Devotion to God is a peculiar characteristic of a Hindu lady. It is only those who have imbibed Western education and have scientific knowledge that have become confirmed atheists. They have no faith in chanting Mantra. Their fate is highly deplorable. Justice Woodroffe has written a most valuable book entitled "Garland of Letters". There he has treated this subject quite rationally. The only remedy for them to acquire devotion is *Satsanga*. *Satsanga* will overhaul their worldly nature, change their materialistic *Samskaras* and infuse genuine *Bhakti*. Hear the famous couplet of Tulasidas:

*Bin Satsang Viveka Na Hoi;  
Rama Kripa Bin Sulab Na Soi.*

The grace of Rama cannot be obtained without the help of *Satsanga* and discrimination.

Glory to that immortal Valmiki, the author of the Ramayana! Glory to Ramayana, the most sacred book in the world! Glory to Sri Rama, the hero; and Sri Sita, the heroine of this celebrated epic! May their blessings be upon you all!

### *Sivananda on 'Peace'—5*

There will be no war, if all people practise truthfulness, universal love, purity, mercy, contentment, self-sacrifice, self-restraint and tolerance. Non-violence is the key to peace.

# The Yoga Vasishtha

## ITS ORIGIN AND GLORY

The earliest work in Sanskrit on Vedanta of the highest order is the *Vasishtha Maha Ramayana* or *Yoga Vasishtha*. This monumental work is one without a second in Sanskrit literature. Vasishtha, the great sage, taught the principles of Vedanta to his royal pupil, Sri Rama, the victor of Ravana and hero of the epic, *Ramayana*. He narrated beautiful and interesting stories to illustrate the principles. The book is written in the language of Valmiki.

It is the crest-jewel of all the works on Vedanta. It is a masterpiece. A study of the book raises a man to the lofty heights of divine splendour and bliss. It is really a vast store of wisdom. Those who practise *Atma Chintana* or *Brahma Abhyasa* or Vedantic meditation will find a priceless treasure in this marvellous book. He who studies the book with great interest and one-pointedness of mind cannot go without attaining Self-realisation. The practical hints on Sadhana are unique. Even the most worldly-minded man will become dispassionate and will attain peace of mind, solace and consolation.

The Yoga Vasishtha was once one of the most widely read books in India. It greatly influenced the general philosophical thought. The late Pundit Brindawana Saraswati of Benares had read the Yoga Vasishtha one hundred and sixty-five times. It is a comprehensive, deep, systematic and literary philosophical work of ancient India.

The name is derived from the sage Vasishtha. Though the book is called Yoga Vasishtha, it treats of Jnana only. Practical Yoga is dealt with in two stories. The

word "Yoga" is used in the title of this work in its generic sense. It is known by the name *Jnana Vasishtham* also.

Rishi Valmiki, the author of the *Ramayana*, compiled this remarkable book. He related the whole of Yoga Vasishtha to Rishi Bharadwaja as it passed between Sri Rama and sage Vasishtha.

There are two books, namely, the *Brihat Yoga Vasishtha* and the *Laghu Yoga Vasishtha*. The former is a big book containing 32,000 Granthas or Slokas or 64,000 lines. "Brihat" means big. The latter book contains 6,000 Granthas. "Laghu" means small.

The Yoga Vasishtha contains a system of ancient philosophical thought unique in its kind. This is a valuable heritage from the hoary past of this sacred land known as Bharatavarsha or Aryavarta. The system of thought that is presented in this book is a highly valuable contribution not only to Indian philosophical thought but also to the philosophical thought of the world at large.

Those whose minds are turned from this world, who have become indifferent towards the objects of this world and who are thirsting for liberation, will be really benefited by a study of this precious book. They will find in this book a vast mine of knowledge and practical spiritual instructions for guidance in their daily life. The Yoga Vasishtha first enunciates a doctrine in its various aspects and then makes it very lucid through interesting stories. This is a book for constant study as many times as possible. It must be read and re-read, studied and mastered.

The Yoga Vasishtha deals with the sub-



ject of effecting union of the individual soul with the Supreme Soul amidst all the trials and tribulations of life. It prescribes various directions for the union of the Jivatman and Paramatman.

The nature of Brahman or *Sat* and the various methods of attaining Self-realisation are vividly described in this book. The main enquiry regarding the final beatitude or *summum bonum* is beautifully dealt with. This book embodies in itself the science of ontology, the knowledge of the Self, the principles of psychology, the science of emotions, the tenets of ethics and practical morality, discourses on theology, etc. The philosophy of Yoga Vasishtha is sublime

### ITS DIVISION AND DOCTRINE

The book consists of six *Prakaranas* or sections, namely: 1. *Vairagya Prakarana* (on dispassion or indifference); 2. *Mumukshu Prakarana* (on longing for liberation); 3. *Utpatti Prakarana* (on creation or origin); 4. *Sthiti Prakarana* (on preservation or existence); 5. *Upasanti Prakarana* (on dissolution or quiescence); and 6. *Nirvana Prakarana* (on liberation). According to Yoga Vasishtha, this world of experience with various objects, time, space and laws, is a creation of the mind, that is, an idea or *Kalpana*. Just as objects are created by the mind in dream, so also everything is created by the mind in the waking state also. Expansion of the mind is *Sankalpa*. *Sankalpa*, through its power of differentiation, generates this universe. Time and space are only mental creations. Through the play of the mind in objects, nearness seems to be a great distance and *vice versa*. Through the force of the mind, a *Kalpa* is regarded as a moment and *vice versa*. A moment of waking experience may be experienced as years in dream. The mind can have the experience of miles within a

short span and miles can also be experienced as a span only. Mind is not anything different and separate from Brahman. Brahman manifests Himself as mind. Mind is endowed with creative power. Mind is the cause of bondage and liberation.

The doctrine of *Drishti-Srishtivada* is expounded in the Yoga Vasishtha. In some places Vasishtha speaks of the *Ajativada* of Sri Gaudapadacharya, the great Guru of Sri Sankara. You begin to see and then there is creation. This is *Drishti-Srishtivada*. This world does not exist at all in the three periods of time. This is *Ajativada* or non-origin of the universe.

This is a most inspiring book. Every student of Vedanta keeps this book for constant study. It is a constant companion for a student on the path of Jnana Yoga. It is not a *Prakriya Grantha*; it does not deal with the *Prakriyas* or categories of Vedanta. Only advanced students can take up this book for their study. Beginners should first study the *Atma Bodha*, *Tattwa Bodha* and *Atmanatma Viveka* of Sri Sankara, and the *Pancheekaran* before they take up the study of Yoga Vasishtha.

### MOKSHA ACCORDING TO YOGA VASISHTHA

Moksha, according to Yoga Vasishtha, is the attainment of the essence of the bliss of Brahman through knowledge of the Self. It is freedom from births and deaths. It is the immaculate and imperishable seat of Brahman wherein there are neither *Sankalpas* nor *Vasanas*. The mind attains its quiescence here. All the pleasures of the whole world are a mere drop when compared to the infinite bliss of Moksha.

That which is called Moksha is neither in *Devaloka* nor in *Patala* nor on earth. When all desires are destroyed, the extinction of the expansive mind alone is Moksha.

Moksha has neither space nor time in itself; nor is there in it any state external or internal. If the illusory idea of "I" or *Ahamkara* perishes, the end of thoughts (which is *Maya*) is experienced, and that is Moksha. Extinction of all *Vasanas* constitutes Moksha. *Sankalpa* is only *Samsara*; its annihilation is Moksha. It is only *Sankalpa* destroyed beyond resurrection, that constitutes the immaculate Brahmic seat or Moksha. Moksha is freedom from all sorts of pains (*Sarva-Duhkha Nivritti*) and the attainment of supreme bliss (*Paramananda Prapti*). "Duhkha" means pain or suffering. Births and deaths generate the greatest pain. Freedom from births and deaths is freedom from all sorts of pain. *Brahma Jnana* or knowledge of the Self alone will give Moksha. The quiescence produced in the mind by the absence of desires for objects is Moksha.

Moksha is not a thing to be achieved. It is already there. You are in reality not bound. You are ever pure and free. If you were really bound, you could never become free. You have to know that you are the immortal, all-pervading Self. To know that, is to become That. This is Moksha. This is the goal of life. This is the *summum bonum* of existence. That state of non-attraction of the mind, when neither "I" nor any other self exists for it, and when it abandons the pleasures of the world, should be known as the path that leads to Moksha.

The Absolute, according to the Yoga Vasishtha, is Satchidananda Para Brahman, who is non-dual, partless, infinite, self-luminous, changeless and eternal. He is the ultimate substance. He is the unity behind the subject and the object of experience. He is one homogeneous essence. He is all-pervading. He is beyond description. He is nameless, colourless, odourless, tasteless, timeless, spaceless, deathless and birthless.

## QUALIFICATIONS OF THE STUDENT

He whose mind is calm, who is endowed with the "Four Means" of salvation, who is free from defects and impurities can realise the Self intuitively through meditation. The scriptures and the spiritual preceptor cannot show us Brahman. They can only guide us and give us a hint by way of analogies and illustrations.

*Shanti* (quiescence of mind), *Santosha* (contentment), *Satsanga* (association with sages) and *Vichara* (Atmic enquiry) are the four sentinels who guard the gates of Moksha. If you make friendship with them, you will easily enter the kingdom of Moksha. Even if you keep company with one of them, he will surely introduce you to his other three companions.

The student should have an unshakable conviction that Brahman is the only Reality, that everything is Brahman, that Brahman is the very Self of all beings. Then he should realise this truth through direct cognition or intuition (*Aparokshanubhava*). This direct knowledge of Brahman alone is the means of liberation.

There is no difference between the waking and dream experiences. The waking state is a long dream. The dream experiences become unreal as soon as man comes back to his waking state. Even so, the waking state becomes unreal for a sage who has attained Self-realisation. For the man who dreams, the waking state becomes unreal.

## ESSENCE OF YOGA VASISHTHA

If you attain knowledge of the Self or *Brahma Jnana*, you will be freed from the trammels of births and deaths. All your doubts will vanish and all *Karmas* will perish. It is through one's own efforts alone that the immortal, all blissful Brahmic seat can be obtained.



The slayer of the Atman is only the mind. The form of the mind is only Sankalpas. The true nature of the mind consists in the Vasanas. The actions of the mind alone are truly termed actions (Karmas). The universe is nothing but the mind manifesting as such through the power of Brahman. The mind contemplating on the body becomes the body itself and then, enmeshed in it, is afflicted by it.

The mind manifests itself as the external world in the shape of pains or pleasures. The mind subjectively is consciousness. Objectively, it is this universe. By its enemy, discrimination, the mind is rendered to the quiescent state of Para Brahman. The real bliss is that which arises when the mind, divested of all desires through the eternal Jnana, destroys its subtle form. The Sankalpas and Vasanas which you generate, enmesh you as in a net. The self-light of Para Brahman alone is appearing as the mind or this universe.

Persons without Atmic enquiry will see as real this world, which is nothing but of the nature of Sankalpas. The expansion of this mind alone is Sankalpa. Sankalpa, through its power of differentiation, generates this universe. Extinction of Sankalpas alone is Moksha.

The enemy of the Atman is this impure mind only which is filled with excessive delusion and hosts of worldly thoughts. There is no vessel on this earth to wade through the ocean of rebirths other than mastery of the antagonistic mind.

The original sprout of the painful Ahamkara, with its tender stem of rebirths, at length ramifies itself everywhere with

its long branches of "mine" and "thine" and yields its unripe fruits of death, disease, old age and sorrows. This tree can be destroyed to its root only by the fire of Jnana.

All the heterogeneous visibles, perceived through the organs of sense, are only unreal; that which is real is Para Brahman or the Supreme Soul.

If all objects which have an enchanting appearance become eyesores and present the very reverse of the former feelings, then the mind is destroyed. All your properties are useless. All wealth lands you in dangers. Freedom from desires will take you to the eternal, blissful abode.

Destroy Vasanas and Sankalpas. Kill egoism. Annihilate this mind. Equip yourself with the "Four Means". Meditate on the pure, immortal, all-pervading Self or Atman. Get knowledge of the Self and attain immortality, everlasting peace, eternal bliss, freedom and perfection.

A Jivanmukta or a realised soul roams about happily. He has neither attractions nor attachments. He has nothing to attain nor has he anything to give up. He works for the well-being of the world. He is free from desires, egoism and greed. He is in solitude though he works in the busiest part of a city.

May you all drink the nectar of Yoga Vasishtha! May you all taste the honey of wisdom of the Self! May you all become Jivanmuktas in this very birth! May the blessings of sage Vasishtha, sage Valmiki and other Brahma-Vidya Gurus be upon you all! May you all partake of the essence of the bliss of Brahman!

### *Sivananda on 'Peace'—6*

Peace is the happy, natural state of man. It is his birthright. War is his disgrace.

# The Mahabharata

## THE GREATNESS OF THE EPIC

MAHABHARATA—the very mention of the name gives a thrill of holy ideas. This is a great epic heroic poem. It contains one hundred thousand verses. It contains the essence of all scriptures. It is an encyclopædia of ethics, knowledge, politics, religion, philosophy and *Dharma*. If you cannot find anything here, you cannot find it anywhere else.

It contains eighteen *Parvas* or sections viz., *Adi Parva*, *Sabha Parva*, *Vana Parva*, *Virata Parva*, *Udyoga Parva*, *Bhishma Parva*, *Drona Parva*, *Karna Parva*, *Shalya Parva*, *Sauptika Parva*, *Stree Parva*, *Shanti Parva*, *Amushasana Parva*, *Asvamedha Parva*, *Ashramavasika Parva*, *Mausala Parva*, *Mahaprasthanika Parva* and *Swargarohanika Parva*. Each *Parva* contains many sub-*Parvas* or sub-sections.

This wonderful book was composed by Sri Vyasa (Krishna Dvaipayana) who was the grandfather of the heroes of the epic. He taught this epic to his son Suka and his disciples Vaisampayana and others. King Janamejaya, son of Parikshit, the grandson of the heroes of the epic, performed a great sacrifice. The epic was recited by Vaisampayana to Janamejaya at the command of Vyasa. Later on, Suta recited the Mahabharata as was done by Vaisampayana to Janamejaya, to Saunaka and others, during a sacrifice performed by Saunaka in Naimisaranva, which is near Sitapur in Uttar Pradesh.

It is very interesting to remember the opening and closing lines of this great epic. It begins with: "Vyasa sang of the ineffable greatness and splendour of Lord Vasudeva, who is the source and support for everything, who is eternal, unchanging, self-lumi-

nous, who is the Indweller in all beings, and of the truthfulness and righteousness of the Pandavas." It ends with: "With raised hands, I shout at the top of my voice; but alas, no one hears my words which can give them Supreme Peace, Joy and Eternal Bliss. One can attain wealth and all objects of desire through *Dharma* (righteousness). Why do not people practise *Dharma*? One should not abandon *Dharma* at any cost, even at the risk of his life. One should not relinquish *Dharma* out of passion or fear or covetousness or for the sake of preserving one's life. This is the Bharata Gayatri. Meditate on this daily, O man! when you retire to sleep and when you rise from your bed every morning. You will attain everything. You will attain glory, fame, prosperity, long life, eternal bliss, everlasting peace and immortality."

## THE EPIC IN A NUTSHELL

The Mahabharata is the history of the Great War of India between the Pandavas and the Kauravas. The two brothers Dhritarashtra and Pandu were born through sage Vyasa after the death of Vichitravirya. Dhritarashtra being blind, Pandu succeeded to the throne but he entrusted the kingdom to his elder brother and himself proceeded to forest where his five sons Yudhishtira, etc., were born and were called the "Pandavas." Dhritarashtra also had one hundred children in Duryodhana and others, who were called the "Kauravas." Pandu died during the infancy of his sons and Dhritarashtra continued to rule the kingdom with the help of their granduncle Bhishma, who had pledged himself to lifelong celibacy. The Pandava and Kaurava princes were brought up together and also educated and trained alike through Dronacharya. Both sets of princes consi-



dered themselves entitled to the kingdom and looked upon the other with hostility and their feelings and relations grew strained from day to day. On account of persecution by the Kauravas, the Pandavas left their home and suffered much hardship and pain, but on their marriage with the daughter of Drupada, king Dhritarashtra sent for the Pandavas and made over half the kingdom to them. The Pandavas improved their country and established their capital at Indraprastha and then performed the horse-sacrifice with great pomp. The Kauravas were also invited there but on seeing the good fortune of the Pandavas and being offended by jokes made at them, they were overcome with jealousy and resentment and returned home with feelings of enmity and revenge. They then conspired against the Pandavas and invited them to gamble and thereby they won all their wealth, kingdom and their person and also insulted and ill-treated their wife, Draupadi, in the presence of all. In the end, it was settled that the Pandavas should go out in exile to the forest for twelve years and pass another year in secrecy and on return from the exile be entitled to get back their lost kingdom. The Pandavas did all this but on their return the Kauravas refused to return the kingdom. This gave rise to the great family war in which all the Kauravas and the two armies were annihilated and the Pandavas alone survived and got the victory.

The Pandavas were assisted by Sri Krishna and other relations, Drupada, Virata, etc., and their forces numbered seven battalions (Akshauhinis). The Kauravas were also assisted by their relations and friends and their forces numbered eleven battalions. The Pandavas were successful on account of their righteous cause and divine grace.

The blind Dhritarashtra represents

*Avidya* or ignorance; Yudhishtira represents *Dharma*; Duryodhana *Adharma*; Draupadi *Maya*; Bhishma dispassion; Dussasana evil quality; Sakuni jealousy and treachery; Arjuna the individual soul; and Lord Krishna the Supreme Soul. *Antahkarana* is the Kurukshetra.

### HEROIC CHARACTERS

The Mahabharata war was a just war. If you go through the speech given by Bhishma to Yudhishtira, you will know the usages of righteous war. A brave hero would fight only with an enemy of equal strength and on equal vantage. This was the motto of every brave soldier who engaged himself in warfare in days of yore in India. Perfect justice and fairness in everything was rigidly observed on both sides. There was no fighting during nights; when the enemy had no arms in his hands, no arrows were aimed at him.

The Mahabharata, the most renowned epic of India, is the only book of its kind in the whole world. It contains countless stories besides the main episode—the *Mahabharata*—which teach moral lessons or illustrate distinguishing characteristics of the ancients of India. It contains the history of ancient India and all the details of its political, social and religious life. The stories, songs, nursery tales, anecdotes, parables, the discourses and sayings contained in this epic are marvellous and highly instructive. It contains the brilliant records of mighty heroes, warriors of great prowess, deep thinkers, profound philosophers, sages and ascetics and devoted wives of chastity. The beauty and charm of the language is extremely striking and attractive.

One is struck with amazement and becomes tongue-tied when he reads the marvellous strength of Bhima, of the wonderful skill in archery and bowmanship of Arjuna,

of the dexterity of Sahadeva in the use of swords and of the profound knowledge of Nakula in astronomy, and of the extreme righteous conduct and justice of Yudhishtira in all matters. The deeds of heroism done by Bhishma, Karna, Drona, Parasurama, Jayadratha, Dhrishtadyumna and many others are superhuman. These heroes did severe Tapas and obtained rare boons from the Lord. That is the reason why they did marvellous heroic deeds which baffle description.

Yudhishtira did not wield arms. He did not take active part in the war-front. He did not use bow and arrows. He had neither the strength of Bhima nor the skill of Arjuna in archery. But he was an embodiment of righteousness. He was an incarnation of *Dharma*. That is the reason why he was called as *Dharmaputra*. He was a wise and ideal king. He established peace and order. He guided his brothers in the path of truth and righteousness and checked them whenever they went astray. Arjuna bore manfully the insults which Draupadi was subjected to before his eyes. He could not disobey Yudhishtira or show him the least disrespect. All the brothers were meek and submissive before Yudhishtira, however mighty and heroic they were. They could crush mountains and dry up oceans with their arrows. They were terrible before their opponents but they were mild and gentle before Yudhishtira and were ever ready to obey his commands. They would never speak a word in opposition. Such was the awe-inspiring personality of Yudhishtira. Had it not been for Yudhishtira, Arjuna and his brothers would not have won the war. Yudhishtira was the founder of an empire. He is an inspiring example, even now, for the rulers of kingdoms and states. He was an embodiment of justice, patience, steadiness, purity, truthfulness and forbearance.

The kings had a complete knowledge of the scriptures and of right and wrong. They practised rigid austerities also. That is the reason why Yudhishtira and Nala were able to bear the privations and hardships. They rolled in wealth and yet they had the strength and power of endurance to walk barefooted in forests and sleep on a bed of stones. They had such a rigorous training and discipline in suffering.

Draupadi, Savitri, Kunti, Madri and Damayanti were highly devoted to their husbands. They were bold and fearless when they were under extreme difficulties, hardships, sufferings and privations. They were pious. They bore the sufferings through the force of their chastity and moral strength. They were ideal wives and ideal mothers. That is the reason why they have left an immortal name behind them.

The Mahabharata still exerts a marvellous influence over the millions of Hindus. The lustre and high renown of these brilliant personages of Mahabharata has not suffered a diminution, in spite of the ravages of cruel time. Their character was untainted and sublime. Hence their deeds also were admirable, laudable and sublime. Determination has ever been the key to success in the lives of great men of all countries. Heroes would not move an inch from the path of their duty when they are called upon to perform it. They were fiery in their determination. They had iron will.

The noble and heroic grandsire Bhishma—who had control over his death and who was unconquerable in war even by the gods—still inspires us with the spirit of self-sacrifice, undaunted courage and purity. Yudhishtira is still a model of justice and righteousness. Remembrance of his very name generates a thrill in our hearts and goads us to tread the path of truth and virtue. Karna still lives in our hearts on



account of his extreme munificence and liberality. Karna's name has become proverbial. People even now say, whenever they come across a very generous man, "He is like Karna in gifts."

Arjuna was the bravest of all the five Pandavas. Arjuna had got Draupadi by winning in the selection match and he had defeated the Kauravas on several occasions. He was a devoted friend of Sri Krishna who had him married to his sister Subhadra, even against the wishes of his elder brother Balarama. Sri Krishna assisted the Pandavas in the great war on account of Arjuna and by acting as his charioteer, led him to victory.

Even now, we admire Arjuna as a perfect man and worship Lord Krishna as our Protector and Saviour. Whenever we are in trouble and distress we pray to Him, "O Lord! Save us just as you saved Draupadi and Gajendra in days of yore."

### THE MESSAGE OF THE MAHABHARATA

The sufferings of the Pandavas and Draupadi, Nala and Damayanti, Savitri and Satyavan, clearly explain to us the fact or hard truth that the goal of life or perfection can only be attained through pain and suffering. Pain is the means through which man is moulded, disciplined and strengthened. Just as impure gold is turned into pure gold by melting it in the crucible, so also the impure and imperfect weak man is rendered pure, perfect and strong, by being melted in the crucible of

pain and suffering. Therefore, one should not be afraid of pain and sufferings. They are blessings in disguise. They are eye-openers. They are silent teachers. They turn the mind towards God and instil mercy in the heart, strengthen the will and develop patience and power of endurance, which are the pre-requisites for God-Realisation.

The message of the Mahabharata is the message of Truth and Righteousness. The great epic produces a moral awakening in the readers and exhorts them to tread the path of *Satya* and *Dharma*. It urges them strongly to do good deeds, practise Dharma, cultivate dispassion by realising the illusory nature of this universe and its vain glories and sensual pleasures, and attain Eternal Bliss and Immortality. It induces people to do what Yudhishtira did and abandon what Duryodhana did. Stick to *Dharma* tenaciously. You will attain everlasting happiness and Moksha, the *summum bonum* of life. This is the final purport or central teachings of the Mahabharata.

May the teachings of this illustrious and ancient epic guide you in every walk of your life. May you stick to *Dharma*. May the great characters of the Mahabharata inspire you! May you imbibe the righteousness of Yudhishtira, the purity of Bhishma, the courage of Arjuna and the liberality of Karna! Glory to Sri Bhagavan Vyasa, the grandsire of the heroes, the author of the Mahabharata, a Chiranjeevi and an Avatara of Lord Hari. May His blessings be upon you all!

### *Sivananda on 'Peace'—7*

Peace is a state of quiet. It is freedom from disturbance, anxiety, agitation, riot or violence. It is harmony, silence, calm, repose, rest. Specifically, it is the absence or cessation of war.

# The Bhagavad Gita

## INTRODUCTION

The Bhagavad Gita is a dialogue between Lord Krishna and Arjuna, narrated in the Bhishma-Parva of the Mahabharata. It comprises eighteen chapters of a total of 701 Sanskrit verses. Considerable matter has been condensed and compressed within these verses. On the battle-field of Kurukshetra, Lord Krishna, during the course of His most interesting and instructive talk with Arjuna, revealed the profound, sublime and soul-stirring spiritual truths, and expounded to him the rare secrets of Yoga, Vedanta, Bhakti and Karma. All the teachings of Lord Krishna were subsequently recorded as the Song Celestial or the Bhagavad Gita by Sri Bhagavan Vyasa for the benefit of humanity at large. The world is under a great debt of gratitude to Sri Vyasa who has presented this Celestial Song to humanity for their daily conduct in life, spiritual uplift and Self-realisation. Only those who are self-controlled and are endowed with faith can reap the full benefit of the Gita, which is the Science of the Soul.

In the whole world-literature there is no book so elevating and so inspiring as the Gita. India is held in high esteem by the Westerners on account of the Gita. Mahatma Gandhi once visited one of the biggest libraries in London and asked the librarian: "What spiritual book is most often issued?" The librarian replied: "It is the Gita." The Gita is very popular throughout the world. It has been translated into almost all the major languages of the world.

Everyone of you should study very carefully the Gita, a sublime and soul-stir-

ring book that can bestow on you supreme peace, immortality and eternal bliss.

There are countless commentaries on the Gita at the present day. A volume can be written on each verse. A busy man with Karmic tendencies will be benefited by "Gita Rahasya", the commentary of Sri Bala Gangadhar Tilak; a man of devotion by studying Sridhara's commentary; and a man of reason by Sri Sankara's commentary.

## GLORY OF THE GITA

The Gita is a unique book for all ages. It is a book that comes under the category of *Prasthanatraya*, the authoritative books of the Hindu religion. The Gita is the Immortal Song of the Soul, which bespeaks the glory of life. The instructions that are inculcated by Lord Krishna are for the whole world. It is a standard book on Yoga for all. The language is as simple as it could be. Even a man who has an elementary knowledge of Sanskrit can go through the book. It deals with the four Yogas, viz., Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Raja Yoga and Jnana Yoga.

The Gita is the cream of the Vedas. It is the essence of the Upanishads. It is the universal scripture for all people of all temperaments and for all times. It is a wonderful book with sublime thoughts and practical instructions on Yoga, devotion, Vedanta and action. It is a marvellous book, profound in thoughts and sublime in heights of vision. It gives peace and solace to the souls who are afflicted by the three fires (*Taapas*) of this mortal world (*Samsara*), viz., *Adhyatmika* (afflictions caused by one's own body), *Adhibhautika* (those



caused by beings around one) and *Adhi-daivika* (those caused by the gods).

The teachings of the Gita are broad, universal and sublime. Its teachings do not belong to any cult, sect, creed, particular age, place or country. They are meant for the people of the whole world at large. The teachings are based on the Upanishads, the ancient wisdom of the seers (Rishis) and sages. It teaches a method which is within the reach of all. It has a message for the solace, peace, freedom, salvation and perfection of all human beings.

The Gita-gospel was given over five thousand years ago on the battle-field of Kurukshetra, by Lord Krishna to Arjuna. The whole world is a big battle-field. The real Kurukshetra is within you. The battle of Mahabharata is still raging within you. Ignorance (*Avidya*) is Dhritarashtra. The individual soul is Arjuna. The Indweller Who dwells in your heart is Lord Krishna, the charioteer. The body is your chariot. The senses (*Indriyas*) are the horses. The mind, egoism, senses, *Samskaras* (mental impressions), *Vasanas* (latent tendencies), cravings, *Raga-Dvesha* (likes and dislikes), lust, jealousy, greed, pride and hypocrisy are your dire enemies.

The Gita gives you practical lessons to regulate your daily life and conduct. It tells you how to overcome the above enemies, how to develop the divine virtues which will help you to attain God-consciousness. The message of the Gita is the message of sacrifice, love and duty. Love all. Share what you have with others. Do your duties well. Rise above petty likes and dislikes. Keep open the portals of your heart by removing selfishness, greed and lust, so that the Supreme Lord Himself may come and dwell therein. These are the lessons of the Gita.

## THE NEED FOR A TEACHER

As the Gita contains subtle and profound teachings, you should study it under a qualified teacher, a Brahma-nishtha Guru, with great faith, single-minded devotion and purity. Then only the truths of the Gita will be revealed unto you like the Amalaka fruit in the hand. Good commentaries like Swami Madhusudana's Gita, Sri Swami Sankarananda's Gita, Sri Sankara's commentary, etc., written by realised sages, will be of immense help to you.

Lord Krishna speaks from different levels of consciousness. Therefore, the help of a teacher is necessary if you wish to know the right significance of the Slokas. You cannot rightly comprehend the meaning of the verses of the Gita without the help of a teacher. Otherwise, you will be like the man who brought a horse before one who asked for 'Saindhava' when he was taking his food. 'Saindhava' means 'salt' as well as 'a horse'.

Study of the Gita alone is sufficient for the purpose of daily *Svadyaya* (scriptural study). You will find a solution here for all your doubts. The more you study with devotion and faith, the more you will get deeper knowledge, penetrative insight and clear right thinking. Even if you live in the spirit of one verse of the Gita, all your miseries will come to an end and you will attain the goal of life—Immortality and Eternal Peace.

The eighteen chapters of the Gita are divided into three sections, illustrative of the three terms of the *Mahavakya* or the Great Sentence of the Sama Veda, *Tat-Tvam-Asi* (That Thou Art). In accordance with this view, the first six chapters deal with the path of action or Karma Yoga and the nature of "Thou" or the *Tvam-Pada*. The next six chapters explain the path of devotion or Bhakti Yoga and the

nature of "That" or *Tat-Pada*. The last six chapters treat of the path of knowledge or Jnana Yoga and the nature of the term "Art" or *Asi-Pada* which establishes the identity of the individual and the Supreme Soul, *Jiva-Brahma-Aikya*.

### THE TEACHING OF THE GITA

Man is a composite of three fundamental factors, viz., cognition, feeling and will. There are people with three kinds of temperaments, viz., the active temperament, the emotional temperament and the rational temperament. So, there are the three Yogas, viz., Jnana Yoga for the man of enquiry and self-analysis or rational temperament, Bhakti Yoga for the man of emotional temperament, and Karma Yoga for the man of active temperament. One Yoga is as efficacious as the other.

The Gita, therefore, formulates the theory of the three *Margas* (paths), viz., the Jnana Marga, the Bhakti Marga and the Karma Marga, to suit to people of all temperaments. According to the teaching of the Gita, there is no conflict among the three. The Gita harmonises wonderfully the philosophy of action, devotion and knowledge. All the three must be harmoniously blended if you wish to attain perfection. You should have the head of Sri Sankara, the heart of Lord Buddha and the hand of Raja Janaka. The three horses of this body-chariot—action, emotion and intellect—should work in perfect harmony. Only then will this body-chariot move smoothly and you can reach the destination safely and quickly. Only then can you rejoice in the Self within. Only then can you sing the song of *Soham* (I am He). Only then can you be in tune with the Infinite. Only then can you hear the soundless voice of the soul and enjoy the sweet internal music of the Self.

The central teaching of the Gita is the attainment of the final beatitude of life or perfection or Freedom (*Moksha*) by doing the duties of life or one's *Svadharmā*. The Lord says to Arjuna: "Therefore without attachment, do thou always perform action which should be done; for by performing action without attachment man reaches the Supreme."

The Gita emphasises again and again that one should cultivate an attitude of non-attachment or detachment. It urges repeatedly that one should live in the world like the lotus-leaf, which is unaffected by water. He who acts placing all actions in the Eternal, abandoning attachment, is as unaffected by sin as a lotus-leaf by water—*Padmapatramivambhasa*.

Attachment is due to Moha. Attachment is the offspring of the quality of Rajas. Non-attachment is born of Sattva. Attachment is an *Asuri-Sampat*, demoniacal quality. Non-attachment is a *Daivi-Sampat*, divine attribute. Attachment is born of ignorance, selfishness and passion. Attachment brings death. Non-attachment is wisdom. Non-attachment brings freedom. Practice of detachment is a rigorous discipline indeed. You will have to practise it again and again. You may tumble down like a baby who is just learning to walk, but you will have to rise up again with a smile and a cheerful heart. Failures are not stumbling blocks, but stepping-stones to success. Try to dwell always in your own Self. Abide in your own Self. Abide in your centre. Think of the Self constantly. All attachments will die automatically. Attachment to God or Atman is a potent antidote to annihilate all worldly attachments. He who has no attachment can really love others. He has pure love or divine Prema. Therefore, without attachment, constantly perform action which is



duty, for, by performing actions without attachment, man verily reaches the Supreme.

### GITA JAYANTI

By the grace of Bhagavan Vyasa this unique Gospel of the Gita was revealed to the world by Sanjaya on the eleventh day (*Ekadasi*) of the bright half of the Margasirsha month (December) according to the Hindu almanac. This day is celebrated as the Gita Jayanti or the Birthday of the Srimad Bhagavad Gita, throughout India by all admirers and lovers of this wonderful treasure of wisdom.

Worship the Srimad Bhagavad Gita as a holy scripture. Study a chapter from it daily. But, stop not with that. Live in

the spirit of the teachings of the Gita. Mere talk and lecture will not help you in any way. You may know the whole of the Gita by heart; you may deliver lectures on the Gita for hours together; and yet, you may not have a ray of the wisdom of the Gita. What is wanted is regular practice of the teachings of the Gita. Become intensely practical. Let the Gita guide your thoughts, prompt your speech, and rule your actions. Then your whole attitude towards life will be gradually changed. You will become a God-man with God-vision. You will no more be perturbed by success or failure, pleasure or pain, loss or gain. You will attain courage, strength, peace and bliss in this very life, right where you are. May the blessings of Lord Krishna be upon you all!

## The Puranas

### THE FRIENDLY TREATISES

The *Puranas* are of the same class as the *Itihasas* (the Ramayana, Mahabharata, etc.). They have five characteristics (*Pancha Lakshana*), viz., history, cosmology (with various symbolical illustrations of philosophical principles), secondary creation, genealogy of kings, and of Manvantaras. All the Puranas belong to the class of *Suhrit-Sammitas*, or the Friendly Treatises, while the Vedas are called the *Prabhu-Sammitas* or the Commanding Treatises with great authority.

Vyasa is the compiler of the Puranas from age to age; and for this age, he is Krishna-Dvaipayana, the son of Parasara.

The Puranas were written to popularise the religion of the Vedas. They contain the essence of the Vedas. The aim of the Puranas is to impress on the minds of the mass-

es the teachings of the Vedas and to generate in them devotion to God, through concrete examples, myths, stories, legends, lives of saints, kings and great men, allegories and chronicles of great historical events. The sages made use of these things to illustrate the eternal principles of religion. The Puranas were meant, not for the scholars, but for the ordinary people who could not understand high philosophy and who could not study the Vedas.

The Darsanas or schools of philosophy are very stiff. They are meant only for the learned few. The Puranas are meant for the masses with inferior intellect. Religion is taught in a very easy and interesting way through the Puranas. Even to this day, the Puranas are popular. The Puranas contain the history of remote times. They also give a description of the regions of the universe not visible to the

ordinary physical eye. They are very interesting to read and are full of information of all kinds. Children hear the stories from their grandmothers. Pundits and Purohits hold *Kathas* or religious discourses in temples, on banks of rivers and in other important places. Agriculturists, labourers and bazaar people hear the stories.

### EIGHTEEN PURANAS

There are eighteen main Puranas and an equal number of subsidiary Puranas or Upa-Puranas. The main Puranas are: Vishnu Purana, Naradiya Purana, Srimad Bhagavata Purana, Garuda (Suparna) Purana, Padma Purana, Varaha Purana, Brahma Purana, Brahmanda Purana, Brahma Vaivarta Purana, Markandeya Purana, Bhavishya Purana, Vamana Purana, Matsya Purana, Kurma Purana, Linga Purana, Siva Purana, Skanda Purana and Agni Purana. Of these, six are Sattvic Puranas and glorify Vishnu; six are Rajasic and glorify Brahma; six are Tamasic and they glorify Siva.

Neophytes or beginners in the spiritual path are puzzled when they go through Siva Purana and Vishnu Purana. In Siva Purana, Lord Siva is highly eulogised and an inferior position is given to Lord Vishnu. Sometimes Vishnu is belittled. In Vishnu Purana, Lord Hari is highly eulogised and an inferior status is given to Lord Siva. Sometimes Lord Siva is belittled. This is only to increase the faith of the devotees in their particular Ishta-Devata. Lord Siva and Lord Vishnu are one.

The best among the Puranas are the Srimad Bhagavata and the Vishnu Purana. The most popular is the Srimad Bhagavata Purana. Next comes Vishnu Purana. A portion of the Markandeya Purana is well known to all Hindus as *Chandi*, or *Devimahatmya*. Worship of God as the Divine

Mother is its theme. *Chandi* is read widely by the Hindus on sacred days and Navaratri (Durga Puja) days.

### TEN AVATARAS AND THEIR PURPOSE

The Srimad Bhagavata Purana is a chronicle of the various Avataras of Lord Vishnu. There are ten Avataras of Vishnu. The aim of every Avatara is to save the world from some great danger, to destroy the wicked and protect the virtuous. The ten Avataras are: *Matsya* (The Fish), *Kurma* (The Tortoise), *Varaha* (The Boar), *Narasimha* (The Man-Lion), *Vamana* (The Dwarf), *Parasurama* (Rama with the axe, the destroyer of the Kshatriya race), *Ramachandra* (the hero of the Ramayana—the son of Dasaratha, who destroyed Ravana), *Sri Krishna*, the teacher of the Gita, *Buddha* (the prince-ascetic, founder of Buddhism), and *Kalki* (the hero riding on a white horse, who is to come at the end of the Kali-Yuga).

The object of the Matsya Avatara was to save Vaivasvata Manu from destruction by a deluge. The object of Kurma Avatara was to enable the world to recover some precious things which were lost in the deluge. The Kurma gave its back for keeping the churning rod when the Gods and the Asuras churned the ocean of milk. The purpose of Varaha Avatara was to rescue, from the waters, the earth which had been dragged down by a demon named Hiran-yaksha. The purpose of Narasimha Avatara, half-lion and half-man, was to free the world from the oppression of Hiran-yakasipu, a demon, the father of Bhakta Prahlada. The object of Vamana Avatara was to restore the power of the gods which had been eclipsed by the penance and devotion of King Bali. The object of Parasurama Avatara was to deliver the country from the oppression of the Kshatriya rulers.



Parasurama destroyed the Kshatriya race twenty-one times. The object of Rama Avatara was to destroy the wicked Ravana. The object of Sri Krishna Avatara was to destroy Kamsa and other demons, to deliver His wonderful message of the Gita in the Mahabharata war, and to become the centre of the Bhakti schools of India. The object of Buddha Avatara was to prohibit animal sacrifices and teach piety. The object of the Kalki Avatara is the destruction of the wicked and the re-establishment of virtue.

### LILAS OF LORD SIVA

Lord Siva incarnated himself in the form of Dakshinamurti to impart knowledge to the four Kumaras. He took human form to initiate Sambandhar, Manikkavasagar, Pattinathar. He appeared in flesh and blood to help his devotees and relieve their sufferings. The divine *Lilas* or sports of Lord Siva are recorded in the Tamil Puranas like Siva Purana, Periya Purana, Siva Parakramam and Tiruvilayadal Purana.

The eighteen Upa-Puranas are: Sanat-kumara, Narasimha, Brihannaradiya, Siva-

rahasya, Durvasa, Kapila, Vamana, Bhargava, Varuna, Kalika, Samba, Nandi, Surya, Parasara, Vasishtha, Devi-Bhagavata, Ganesa and Hamsa.

Study of the Puranas, listening to sacred recitals of scriptures, describing and expounding of the transcendent *Lilas* of the Blessed Lord—these form an important part of Sadhana of the Lord's devotees. It is most pleasing to the Lord. *Sravaṇa* is a part of *Navavidha-Bhakti*. *Kathas* and *Upanyasas* open the springs of devotion in the hearts of hearers and develop *Prema-Bhakti* which confers immortality on the Jiva.

The language of the Vedas is archaic, and the subtle philosophy of Vedanta and the Upanishads is extremely difficult to grasp and assimilate. Hence, the Puranas are of special value as they present philosophical truths and precious teachings in an easier manner. They give ready access to the mysteries of life and the key to bliss. Imbibe their teachings. Start a new life of *Dharma-Nishtha* and *Adhyatmic Sadhana* from this very day, and attain Immortality.

## The Agamas

### INTRODUCTION

Another class of popular scriptures are the *Agamas*. The Agamas are theological treatises and practical manuals of divine worship. The Agamas include the *Tantras*, *Mantras* and *Yantras*. These are treatises explaining the external worship of God, in idols, temples, etc. All the Agamas treat of (i) *Jnana* or Knowledge, (ii) *Yoga* or Concentration, (iii) *Kriya* or Esoteric Ritual and (iv) *Charya* or Exoteric Worship. They also give elaborate details about onto-

logy and cosmology, liberation, devotion, meditation, philosophy of Mantras, mystic diagrams, charms and spells, temple-building, image-making, domestic observances, social rules, public festivals, etc.

### DIVISIONS OF THE AGAMAS

The Agamas are divided into three sections: the *Vaishnava*, the *Saiva* and the *Sakta*. The three chief sects of Hinduism, viz., Vaishnavism, Saivism and Saktism, base their doctrines and dogmas on their respective Agamas. The Vaishnava Agamas

or Pancharatra Agamas glorify God as Vishnu. The Saiva Agamas glorify God as Siva and have given rise to an important school of philosophy known as Saiva-Siddhanta, which prevails in South India, particularly in the districts of Tirunelveli and Madurai. The Sakta Agamas or Tantras glorify God as the Mother of the Universe, under one of the many names of Devi.

The Agamas do not derive their authority from the Vedas, but are not antagonistic to them. They are all Vedic in spirit and character. That is the reason why they are regarded as authoritative.

### VAISHNAVA AGAMAS

The Vaishnava Agamas are of four kinds: the Vaikhanasa, Pancharatra, Pratihasthasara and Vijnanalalita. The Brahma, Saiva, Kaumara, Vasishtha, Kapila, Gautamiya and the Naradiya are the seven groups of the Pancharatras. The Naradiya section of the Santi-Parva of the Mahabharata is the earliest source of information about the Pancharatras.

Vishnu is the Supreme Lord in the Pancharatra Agamas. The Vaishnavas regard the Pancharatra Agamas to be the most authoritative. They believe that these Agamas were revealed by Lord Vishnu Himself. Narada-Pancharatra says: "Everything from Brahman to a blade of grass is Lord Krishna." This corresponds to the Upanishadic declaration: "All this is, verily, Brahman—*Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma*."

There are two hundred and fifteen of these Vaishnava texts. Isvara, Ahirbudhnya, Paushkara, Parama, Sattvata, Brihad-Brahma and Jnanamritasara Samhitas are the important ones.

### SAIVA AGAMAS

The Saivas recognise twenty-eight Agamas, of which the chief is Kamika. The

Agamas are also the basis of Kashmir Saivism which is called the Pratyabhijna system. The latter works of Pratyabhijna system show a distinct leaning to Advaitism. The Southern Saivism, i.e., Saiva Siddhanta, and the Kashmir Saivism, regard these Agamas as their authority, besides the Vedas. Each Agama has Upa-Agamas. Of these, only fragmentary texts of twenty are extant. Lord Siva is the central God in the Saiva Agamas. They are suitable to this age, Kali Yuga. They are open to all castes and both the sexes.

### SAKTA AGAMAS

There is another group of scriptures known as the *Tantras*. They belong to the Sakta cult. They glorify *Sakti* as the World-Mother. They dwell on the Sakti (energy) aspect of God and prescribe numerous courses of ritualistic worship of the Divine Mother in various forms. There are seventy-seven Agamas. These are very much like the Puranas in some respects. The texts are usually in the form of dialogues between Siva and Parvati. In some of these, Siva answers the questions put by Parvati, and in others, Parvati answers, Siva questioning. Mahanirvana, Kularnava, Kulasara, Prapanchasara, Tantraraja, Rudra-Yamala, Brahma-Yamala, Vishnu-Yamala and Todala Tantra are the important works. The Agamas teach several occult practices some of which confer powers, while the others bestow knowledge and freedom. Sakti is the creative power of Lord Siva. Saktism is really a supplement to Saivism.

Among the existing books on the Agamas, the most famous are the Isvara-Samhita, Ahirbudhnya-Samhita, Sanatkumara-Samhita, Narada-Pancharatra, Spanda-Pradipika and the Mahanirvana-Tantra.



# The Darsanas

## WHAT IS DARSANA

The six scriptures of the Hindus are: (i) *Srutis*, (ii) *Smritis*, (iii) *Itihasas*, (iv) *Puranas*, (v) *Agamas*, and (vi) *Darsanas*. While the first four are intuitional, and the fifth inspirational and emotional, the *Darsanas* are the intellectual section of the Hindu writings. *Darsanas* are schools of philosophy based on the *Vedas*. The *Agamas* are theological. The *Darsana* literature is philosophical. The *Darsanas* are meant for the erudite scholars who are endowed with acute acumen, good understanding, power of reasoning and subtle intellect. The *Itihasas*, *Puranas* and *Agamas* are meant for the masses. The *Darsanas* appeal to the intellect, while the *Itihasas*, *Puranas*, etc., appeal to the heart.

Philosophy has six divisions—*Shad-Darsana*—, the six *Darsanas* or ways of seeing things, usually called the six systems or six different schools of thought. The six schools of philosophy are the six instruments of true teaching or the six demonstrations of Truth. Each school has developed, systematised and correlated the various parts of the *Vedas* in its own way. Each system has its *Sutrakara*, i.e., the one great Rishi who systematised the doctrines of the school and put them in short aphorisms or *Sutras*.

## SUTRAS AND COMMENTARIES

The *Sutras* are terse and laconic. The Rishis have condensed their thoughts in the aphorisms. It is very difficult to understand them without the help of commentaries by great sages or Rishis. Hence, there arose many commentators or *Bhashyakaras*. There are glosses, notes and, later, commentaries on the original commentaries.

Each set of *Sutras* has, therefore, got its *Bhashya*, *Vritti*, *Varttika*, *Vyakhyana* or *Tika* and *Tippani*.

A *Sutra* or an aphorism is a short formula with the least possible number of letters, without any ambiguity or doubtful assertion, containing the very essence, embracing all meanings, without any stop or obstruction and absolutely faultless in nature. A *Bhashya* is an elaborate exposition, a commentary on the *Sutras*, with word by word meaning of the aphoristic precepts, their running translation, together with the individual views of the commentator or the *Bhashyakara*. A *Vritti* is a short gloss explaining the aphorisms in a more elaborate way, but not as extensively as a *Bhashya*. A *Varttika* is a work where a critical study is made of that which is said and left unsaid or imperfectly said in a *Bhashya*, and the ways of making it perfect by supplying the omissions therein, are given. A *Vyakhyana* or *Tika* is a running explanation in a easier language of what is said in the original, with little elucidations here and there. *Tippani* is just like a *Vritti*, but is less orthodox than the *Vritti*. It is an explanation of difficult words or phrases occurring in the original.

## THE SIX SYSTEMS OF PHILOSOPHY

Gautama Rishi systematised the principles of *Nyaya* or the Indian logical system. Kanada composed the *Vaiseshika Sutras*. Kapila Muni founded the *Sankhya* system. Patanjali Maharshi is the first systematiser of the Yoga school; he composed his *Yoga Sutras*. The *Yoga-Darsana* of Patanjali is a celebrated text-book on Raja Yoga. Jaimini, a disciple of Vyasa, composed the *Sutras* of the *Mimamsa* school, which is based on the ritual-sections of the

Vedas. Badarayana composed his famous *Vedanta-Sutras* or *Brahma-Sutras* which expound the teachings of the Upanishads. The different schools of the Vedanta have built their philosophy on the foundation of these Sutras.

### DIFFERENT WAYS OF APPROACH TO THE SAME GOAL

The six schools of thought are like the six different roads which lead to one city. You may go to Bombay by train or aeroplane or car or bus or any other vehicle. Even so, you can reach the goal of life through Yoga, or Vedanta, or any other path. The methods or ways of approach to the Goal are different to suit people of different temperaments, capacities and mental calibre. But they all have one aim, viz., removal of ignorance and its effects of pain and sufferings, and the attainment of freedom, perfection, immortality and eternal bliss by union of the individual soul (Jivatman) with the Supreme Soul (Paramatman).

No student of Hinduism ought to be satisfied without acquiring a clear and accurate knowledge of the principal distinguishing characteristics of the six philosophical schools. The more advanced scholar should study the original Sutras in which the doctrines of each school are enunciated. Study of the six schools of philosophy will sharpen the intellect and give you vast knowledge. You will have a clear and comprehensive understanding of the Truth. Each system is a step or rung in the spiritual ladder.

### INTERRELATION BETWEEN THE SIX SYSTEMS

The six schools are divided into three groups: (i) the Nyaya and the Vaiseshika, (ii) the Sankhya and the Yoga, and (iii)

the Mimamsa and the Vedanta. The Vaiseshika is a supplement of the Nyaya. The Yoga is a supplement of the Sankhya. The Vedanta is an amplification and fulfilment of the Sankhya. Study of Vyakarana (grammar), Mimamsa, Nyaya and Sankhya sharpens the intellect and enables the aspirants to grasp the Vedanta. The Nyaya is considered as a prerequisite for all philosophical enquiry.

The Vaiseshika is not very much in honour now. The Nyaya is popular. The Sankhya is not a living faith. The Yoga is practised by a few in its practical form. The Vedanta is the most popular of all the schools today.

The Nyaya and the Vaiseshika will give you an analysis of the world of experience. They arrange all things of the world into certain kinds or categories (*Padarthas*). They explain how God has made all this material world out of atoms and molecules. They show the way to attain knowledge of God. The Sankhya will provide you with deep knowledge on Hindu psychology. Kapila Muni was the father of psychology. The Yoga deals with the control of *Vrittis*, or thought-waves, and with meditation. The Yoga system shows the ways to discipline the mind and the senses. The Yoga will help you to cultivate concentration and one-pointedness of mind and enter into *Nirvikalpa Samadhi* or the Superconscious State. The Purva-Mimamsa deals with the Karma-Kanda of the Vedas, and the Uttara-Mimamsa with the Jnana-Kanda. The Uttara-Mimamsa is also known as the Vedanta-Darsana. This is the corner-stone of Hinduism. The Vedanta philosophy explains in detail the nature of Brahman or the Eternal Being, and shows that the individual soul is, in essence, identical with the Supreme Self. It gives methods to remove *Avidya* or the veil of ignorance and to



merge oneself in the ocean of bliss or Brahman.

The Nyaya calls ignorance *Mithya Jnana*, false knowledge. The Sankhya styles it *Aviveka*, non-discrimination between the real and the unreal. The Vedanta names it *Avidya*, nescience. Each philosophy aims at its eradication by Knowledge or Jnana. Then one attains eternal bliss or immortality.

By study of Nyaya and Vaisesika, one learns to utilise his intellect to find out fallacies and to know the material constitution of the world. By study of Sankhya, one understands the course of evolution. By study and practice of Yoga, one gains self-restraint and obtains mastery over mind and senses. By practice of Vedanta, one reaches the highest rung of the ladder of spirituality or the pinnacle of divine glory, oneness with the Supreme Being, by the destruction of ignorance (*Avidya*).

### VEDANTA—THE MOST SATISFACTORY SYSTEM OF PHILOSOPHY

Some of the doctrines of the Nyaya, the Vaisesika, the Sankhya and the Yoga are opposed to the teaching of the Vedas. These systems are only superficially based on the Vedas. The Nyaya and the Vaisesika schools rely too much on human reason, though they accept the Vedas as the supreme authority. Human intellect is frail and finite. It has got its limitations. It functions within time, space and causation. Its findings cannot be infallible. It cannot solve transcendental matters. Vedas only are infallible and authoritative. They contain the revelations or direct intuitional experiences of Seers and Rishis. These experiences will tally with the experiences of those who have attained Knowledge of the Self (*Brahma-Jnana*).

The Vedanta is the most satisfactory system of philosophy. It has been evolved out of the Upanishads. It has superseded all other schools. The Mimamsa school has laid great stress on rituals, or Karma Kanda. According to the Mimamsa school, Karma or ritual is all-in-all in the Veda. *Upasana* (worship) and *Jnana* (knowledge) are only accessories to Karma. This view is refuted by the Vedanta school. According to the Vedanta, Self-realisation (*Jnana*) is the foremost thing, and ritual and worship are accessories. Karma will take one to heaven which is only an impermanent place of refined sensual enjoyment. Karma cannot destroy the cycle of births and deaths, and cannot give eternal bliss and immortality.

During the time of Sankaracharya, all the six schools of philosophy flourished. Therefore, he had to refute the other systems in order to establish his absolute monism (*Kevala Advaita*). But, nowadays, Sankhya, Vaisesika, etc., are in name only. Even now, some Hindu preachers, Sannyasins and Mandalesvars try to establish Advaita Vedanta by refuting these old systems. This is a mistake. They will have to refute at the present moment materialism, agnosticism, atheism and science, and then establish Advaita Vedanta.

### OTHER SCRIPTURES

The *Tevaram* and the *Tiruvachakam* which are the hymns of the Saiva saints of South India; the *Divya-Prabandham* of the Alvar or Vaishnava saints of South India; the songs of Kabir; the *Abhangas* of Tukaram and the Ramayana of Tulasi Das—all of which are the outpourings of great realised souls—are wonderful scriptures. They contain the essence of the Vedas.

# Brahma Sutras

## INTRODUCTION

Hari Om! Salutations to Sri Vyasa, the Avatara of Vishnu, the wise Badarayana and Sri Krishna Dwaipayana.

Vedas consist of three portions viz., the *Karma-Kanda* which deals with sacrifices or ceremonial rites, the *Upasana-Kanda* which treats of Upasana (worship) and the *Jnana-Kanda* which deals with knowledge of Brahman. Karma-Kanda represents the feet of a man, Upasana-Kanda the heart, and the Jnana-Kanda the head. Just as the head is the most important portion of a man, so also the Upanishads which treat of the knowledge portion of the Vedas is the head of the Vedas. Hence it is said to be the *Shir* (head) of Vedas.

*Mimamsa* means the investigation or enquiry into the connected meaning of the sacred texts. Of this Mimamsa two branches have been recognised, the *Purva Mimamsa* (earlier) and the *Uttara Mimamsa* (the latter). The former systematises the Karma-Kanda—the portion of the Vedas which pertains to action and sacrifices and which comprises the *Samhitas* and the *Brahmanas*; the latter systematises the Jnana-Kanda i.e., that part of the Vedas which includes the *Aranyaka* portion of the Brahmanas and the *Upanishads*. Jaimini is the author of the Purva Mimamsa. Sri Vyasa (Badarayana or Krishna Dwaipayana), the Guru of Jaimini, is the author of the Brahma Sutras otherwise known as the Vedanta Sutras. The study of Brahma Sutras is a synthetic study of the Upanishads. It treats of the Vedanta Philosophy.

The Vedas are eternal. They were not written by any individual. They came out

from the breath of Hiranyagarbha (Lord Brahma). Vedanta is the end or gist of the Vedas. It deals with the knowledge portion. Vedanta is not mere speculation. It is the authentic record of transcendental experiences or direct and actual realisation of the great Rishis or Seers. Brahma Sutras is the Science of the Soul.

## THE NEED AND PURPOSE

*Sutras* are concise aphorisms. They give the essence of the arguments on a topic. Maximum of thought is compressed or condensed into these Sutras in as few words as possible. It is easy to remember them. Great intellectual people only, with realisation, can compose Sutras. They are clues or aids to memory. They cannot be understood without a lucid commentary (*Bhashya*). The commentary also is in need of further elaborate explanation. Thus the interpretations of the Sutras gave rise to various kinds of literary writings such as *Vrittis* (gloss) and *Karikas*. The different Acharyas (founders of different schools of thought) have given their own interpretations of the Sutras to establish their own doctrines. The Bhashya of Sri Sankara on Brahma Sutras is known as *Sareeraka Bhashya*. His school of thought is *Kevala Advaita*. The Bhashya of Sri Ramanuja who founded the *Visishtadvaita* school is called *Sri Bhashya*. The commentary of Sri Nimbarkacharya is known as *Vedanta Parijata Saurabha*. Sri Vallabhacharya expounded his system of philosophy known as *Suddhadwaita* (pure monism) and his commentary on the Brahma Sutras is known as *Anu Bhashya*.

Sanskrit is very elastic. It is like Kamadhenu or Kaipataru. You can milk



out of it various kinds of *Rasas* according to your intellectual calibre and spiritual experiences. Therefore different Acharyas have built different systems of thought or cults by interpreting the Sutras in their own ways and became founders of sects. Madhva founded his own system of *Dwaita*. The cults of Vishnu known as Bhagawat or Pancharatra and those of Siva, Pasupata or Maheswara have interpreted Brahma Sutras in accordance with their own tenets. Nimbarkacharya interpreted the Vedanta system from the standpoint of *Bhedabheda-Dwaitadwaita*. He was largely influenced by the teachings of Bhaskara who flourished in the first half of the ninth century. The theory held by Bhaskara and Nimbarka was held by the ancient teacher Audulomi. Badarayana himself refers to this theory in his Brahma Sutras.

There are more than fourteen commentaries on the Brahma Sutras. Sri Appayya Dikshita rendered the commentary of Sri Sankara more clear by his *Parimala*, Sri Vachaspathimisra by his work *Bhamati* and Sri Amalananda Saraswati by his *Kalpataru*.

The erroneous identification of the body with the pure Atman is the root cause for human sufferings and miseries, for births and deaths. You identify yourself with the body and say: "I am fair, dark, stout or thin. I am a Brahmin, I am a Kshatriya, I am a doctor." You identify yourself with the senses and say: "I am blind, I am dumb." You identify yourself with the mind and say: "I know nothing. I know everything. I became angry. I enjoyed a good meal. I am suffering from this disease." The entire object of the Brahma Sutras is to remove this erroneous identification of the Soul with the body which is the root cause of your suffering and miseries, which is the product of *Avidya* (igno-

rance) and help you in the attainment of the final emancipation through knowledge of Brahman.

The Upanishads seem to be full of contradictions at first. They do not contain consistent system of thought. Sri Vyasa systematised the thoughts or philosophy of the Upanishads in his Brahma Sutras. The Sutras reconcile the conflicting statements of the Upanishads. In reality there are no conflicts for the thinker. The different views expressed in the Upanishads represent the different stages of the development of thought. Audulomi and Asmarathya also did this work in their own way and founded their own schools of thought.

### BRAHMA SUTRAS AND THE ACHARYAS

Those who wish to study the philosophy of Vedanta should study the Ten Classical Upanishads and the Brahma Sutras. All Acharyas have commented on Brahma Sutras. This is a great authority for every philosophical school in India. If any Acharya wishes to establish his own cult or sect or school of thought, he will have to write a commentary of his own on Brahma Sutras. Then only it will be recognised.

The five great Acharyas—Sri Sankara, the exponent of Kevala Adwaita or uncompromising monism; Sri Ramanuja, the exponent of Visishtadwaita or qualified monism; Sri Nimbarka, the exponent of Bhedabheda Vada; Sri Madhva, the exponent of strict Dwaitism or Dwaita Vada; and Sri Vallabha, the exponent of Suddhadwaita Vada or pure monism—agree that Brahman is the cause of this world and that knowledge of Brahman leads to Moksha or the final emancipation, which is the goal of life. They also emphatically declare that Brahman can be known only through the

scriptures and not through mere reasoning. But they differ amongst themselves as to the nature of this Brahman, the state of the soul in the state of final emancipation, the means of attaining It and Its causality with reference to this universe.

### SANKARA

According to Sri Sankara there is one Absolute Brahman Who is Satchidananda, Who is of an absolutely homogeneous nature. The appearance of this world is due to *Maya*—the illusory power of Brahman—which is neither *Sat* nor *Asat*. This world is unreal. This world is a *Vivarta* or apparent modification through *Maya*. Brahman is the only Reality. The individual soul has limited himself through *Avidya* and identification with the body and other vehicles. Through his selfish actions he enjoys the fruits of his actions. He becomes the actor and enjoyer. He regards himself as atomic and as an agent on account of *Avidya* or the limiting *Antah-karana*. The individual soul becomes identical with Brahman when his *Avidya* is destroyed. In reality *Jiva* is all-pervading and identical with Brahman. *Ishvara* or *Saguna Brahman* is a product of *Maya*. Worship of *Ishvara* leads to *Krama Mukti*. The pious devotees (the knowers of *Saguna Brahman*) go to *Brahma Loka* and attain final release through highest knowledge. They do not return to this world. They attain the *Nirguna Brahman* at the end of the cycle. Knowledge of *Nirguna Brahman* is the only means of liberation. The knowers of *Nirguna Brahman* attain immediate final release or *Sadyomukti*. They need not go by the path of Gods or the *Devayana*. They merge themselves in *Para Brahman*. They do not go to any *Loka* or world. Sri Sankara's Brahman is *Nirvisesha*, Brahman (Impersonal Absolute) without attributes.

### RAMANUJA

According to Sri Ramanuja Brahman is with attributes (*Savishesha*). He is endowed with all auspicious qualities. He is not merely intelligence itself, but intelligence is also his chief attribute. He contains within Himself whatever exists. World and individual souls are essential real constituents of Brahman's nature. Matter (*Achit*) and soul (*Chit*) form the body of the Lord, Lord Narayana, who is the Inner Ruler (*Antaryamin*). Matter and souls are called modes of Him (*Prakara*). The individual souls will never be entirely resolved in Brahman. According to Ramanuja Brahman is not absolutely one and homogeneous. The individual souls undergo a state of *Sankocha* (contraction) during *Pralaya*. They expand (*Vikasa*) during creation. Sri Ramanuja's Brahman is a Personal God with attributes. The individual soul of Ramanuja is really individual. It will remain a personality for ever. The soul remains in *Vaikuntha* for ever in a state of bliss and enjoys the divine *Aishvarya* of Lord Narayana. *Bhakti* is the chief means to final emancipation and not *Jnana*. Sri Ramanuja follows in his *Bhashya* the authority of *Bodhayana*.

### NIMBARKA

According to Sri Nimbarkacharya Brahman is considered as both the efficient and material cause of the world. Brahman is both *Nirguna* and *Saguna*. The universe is not unreal or illusory but is a true manifestation or *Parinama* of Brahman. (Sri Ramanuja also holds this view. He says, "Just as milk is transformed into curd, so also Brahman has transformed Himself as this universe.") This world is identical with and at the same time different from Brahman, just as the wave or bubble is the same and at the same time different from



water. The individual souls are parts of the Supreme Self. They are controlled by the Supreme Being. The final salvation lies in realising the true nature of one's own soul. This can be achieved by *Bhakti* (devotion). The individuality of the finite self (*Jivatma*) is not dissolved even in the state of final emancipation. Sri Ramanuja also holds that the Jiva assumes the divine body of Sri Narayana with four hands and enjoys in Vaikuntha the divine Aishwarya of the Lord.

### VALLABHA

The philosophy of Sri Vallabhacharya is *Suddha-Advaita* or pure monism, because he does not admit *Maya* like Sankara, and believes that the whole world of matter and souls is real and is only a subtle form of God. Those who bring *Maya* for the explanation of the world are not pure Advaitins, because they admit a second to Brahman. Vallabha holds that Brahman can create the world without any connection with such a principle as *Maya*, but Sankara traces the universe to Brahman through the power of *Maya*. Hence the philosophy of Vallabha is called pure monism or *Suddhadvaita*.

Vallabha says that the entire universe is real and is subtly Brahman. The individual souls and the world are, in essence, one with Brahman. Jiva, Kala (time) and Prakriti or *Maya* are eternal existences, but they have not separate existence apart from Brahman.

Vallabha's religion is a religion addressed to the worship of Vishnu in the form of Krishna. It was derived chiefly, like the system of Chaitanya, from the Vaishnava philosophy propounded by Ramanuja. It is centred round the conception of a personal and beneficent God who is *Sat-Chit-Ananda*. Lord Krishna is the highest Brahman. His body consists of

*Sat-Chit-Ananda*. He is called Purushotama.

Vallabha's followers worship Bala-Krishna (Krishna as a lad). They have *Vatsalya-Bhava* (the attitude which regards God as a child). Vallabha lays great stress on *Pushti* (grace) and *Bhakti* (devotion). *Maha-Pushti* is the highest grace or *Anugraha* which helps the aspirants to attain God-realisation.

### MADHVA

Madhva makes an absolute distinction between God, and animate and inanimate objects. God is the only independent Reality. The animate and inanimate objects are dependent realities. Madhva's Vedanta is the doctrine of absolute differences. It is an *Atyanta-Bheda-Darsana*. He insists on five great distinctions (*Pancha-Bheda*), viz., (i) the distinction between God and the individual soul, (ii) the distinction between God and matter, (iii) the distinction between the individual soul and matter, (iv) the distinction between one soul and another, and (v) the distinction between one material thing and another. Madhva's philosophy is a philosophy of distinction.

In Madhva's system of philosophy, Hari or Vishnu is the Supreme Being. The world is real. Difference is true. All the Jivas are dependent on Hari, the Lord. There are grades of superiority and inferiority among the individual souls. Liberation is the individual soul's enjoyment of its innate bliss. This is Moksha or the final emancipation. *Bhakti*, or devotion, without faults, is the means of attaining Moksha. Perception, inference and the scriptures are the three *Pramanas*, or ways of knowledge. Hari is knowable only through the Vedas. Worship of Lord Krishna as taught in the Bhagavata Purana is the centre of his reli-

gion. This is the quintessence of Madhva's teachings.

### RECONCILIATION

You may ask why do such great realised souls hold different views, why have they started different cults or systems. The highest philosophy of Sri Sankara which bespeaks the identity of the individual and Supreme Soul cannot be understood by the vast majority of persons. Therefore Sri Madhva and Sri Ramanuja started their Bhakti cult. The different schools are different rungs in the ladder of Yoga. The student must place his foot step by step and finally reach the highest peak of perfection—the *Kevaladwaita* realisation of Sri Sankara. As temperaments are different, different schools are also necessary to suit the taste, capacity and stage of evolution of the aspirant. Therefore all schools and cults are necessary. They have got their own place and scope.

The views of various Acharyas are all true in respect of the particular aspect of Brahman dealt with by them, each in his own way. Sankara has taken Brahman in His transcendental aspect, while Sri Ramanuja has taken Him chiefly in His immanent aspect. People were following blindly the rituals during the time of Sri Sankara. When he was preparing his commentary he had in view the purpose of combating the baneful effects which blind ritualism produced. He never condemned selfless service or Nishkamya Karma Yoga. He condemned the performance of rituals with selfish motives.

### CONCLUSION

Sankara Bhashya is the oldest of all commentaries. It upholds Suddha Para Brahman or the Supreme Self of the Upanishads as something superior to other

divine beings. It propounds a very bold philosophy and declares emphatically that the individual soul is identical with the Supreme Self. Sankara's philosophical view accurately represents the meaning of Badarayana. His explanations only faithfully render the intended meaning of Sri Vyasa. This is beyond doubt and dispute.

Students of Kevaladwaita School of Philosophy should study the Sareeraka Bhashya of Sri Sankara which is profound, subtle and unique. It is an authority which leads to the right understanding of the Brahma Sutras. The best thinkers of India, Greece, Germany, England and America belong to this school. It occupies a high rank in books on philosophy. Advaita philosophy is the most sublime and the grandest philosophy of the Hindus.

You can understand the Brahma Sutras if you have a knowledge of the twelve classical Upanishads. You can understand the second chapter if you have a knowledge of Sankhya, Nyaya, Yoga, Mimamsa, Vaiseshika Darshan and Buddhistic school too. All these schools are refuted here by Sri Sankara. Sri Sankara's commentary is the best commentary. Dr. Thibut has translated this commentary. "Brahma Sutras" is one of the books of Prasthanatraya. This is an authoritative book on Hindu Philosophy. The work consists of 4 *Adhyayas* (chapters), 16 *Padas* (sections), 223 *Adhikaranas* (topics), and 564 *Sutras* (aphorisms). The first chapter (*Samanvayadhyaya*) unifies Brahman, the second (*Avirodhadhyaya*) refutes other philosophies, the third (*Sadhanadhyaya*) deals with practice (*Sadhana*) to attain Brahman and the fourth (*Phaladhyaya*) treats of fruits of Self-realisation. Each chapter contains four *Padas*. Each *Pada* contains *Adhikaranas*. Each *Adhikarana* has a separate question to discuss. The first five *Adhi-*



karanas of the first chapter are very very important.

Glory to Sri Vyasa Bhagavan, son of Parasara, the mighty sage, a Chiranjivi

who has written all Puranas and also divided the Vedas. May his blessings be upon you all!

## The Secular Writings

### THE SUBHASHITAS

The *Subhashitas* are wise sayings, instructions and stories, either in poetry or in prose. Examples are Bhartrihari's three centuries of verses, the Subhashita-Ratna-Bhandagara and Somadeva Bhatta's Katha-Sarit-Sagara or Kshemendra's Brihat-Katha-Manjari. The Panchatantra and the Hitopadesa also belong to this category.

### THE KAVYAS

These are highly scholarly compositions in poetry, prose or both. The greatest of poetical *Kavyas* are those of Kalidasa (The *Raghuvamsha* and *Kumarasambhava*), Bhavabuti (The *Kiratarjuniya*), Magha (The *Sisupalavadha*), and Sri Harsha (The *Naishadha*). The best prose *Kavyas* in the whole of Sanskrit literature were written by Bhattabana (The *Kadambari* and *Harsha-charita*), the great genius in classical Sanskrit. Among those containing both poetry and prose, the *Champu-Ramayana* and the *Champu-Bharata* are most famous. These are all wonderful masterpieces which will ever remain to glorify India's literary calibre.

### THE NATAKAS

These are marvellously scholastic dramas embodying the *Rasas* of *Sringara*, *Vira*, *Karuna*, *Adbhuta*, *Hasya*, *Bhayanaka*, *Bibhatsa* and *Raudra*. It is told that none can write on the ninth Rasa, viz., *Santi*. It is attainable only on final Liberation.

The best dramas are written by Kalidasa (*Sakuntala*), Bhavabhuti (*Uttara-Ramacharita*), and Visakhadatta (*Mudrarakshasa*).

### THE ALANKARAS

These are grand rhetorical texts, treating of the science of perfection and beauty of ornamental language and of effective composition with elegance and force, both in poetry and in prose. These are the fundamentals of Sanskrit Sahitya, even superior to the *Kavyas* and the *Natakas*. The best *Alankara-Granthas* are those of Mamata (*Kavyaprakasa*) and Jagannatha (*Rasagangadhara*).

### CONCLUSION

These constitute the entirety of Sanskrit literature—sacred and secular. The *Sruti* is the root; the *Smritis*, *Itihasas* and *Puranas* are the trunk; the *Agamas* and *Darsanas* are the branches; and the *Subhashitas*, *Kavyas*, *Natakas* and *Alankaras* are the flowers of the tree of India's Culture.

The *Smritis*, the *Itihasas*, the *Puranas*, the *Agamas* and the *Darsanas* are only developments of the Veda. Their ultimate source is the Veda. Their one common aim is to enable man to annihilate his ignorance and attain perfection, freedom, immortality and eternal bliss through knowledge of God or the Eternal. Their purpose is to make man like God and one with Him.





**SECTION III**  
**Sivananda**  
**On**  
**The Religions of the World**

THE HISTORY OF THE  
CITY OF  
NEW-YORK  
FROM THE FIRST SETTLEMENT  
TO THE PRESENT TIME



# Religion

## WHAT IS RELIGION

Religion comes from the Latin word "religio", which consists of two words viz., "re" (back) and "ligare" (to bring). That which brings the soul back to God is religion. Religion shows the way for the attainment of God-realisation.

Religion satisfies the deep inward craving in man who is not always content with leading merely an animal existence but wants spiritual consolation, solace and peace. Man cannot live by bread alone. A time comes in the life of many of us when mere worldly prosperity does not satisfy us and we hanker after something more. In the case of many more, trials and tribulations of life turn their attention to spiritual solace.

Religion is the relationship between the three fundamental principles—God, world and the individual. Religion gives solace to the weary pilgrim in this earth-plane. It explains life's mystery to him. It shows the path to the immortal abode.

Religion, God, Dharma, Karma, world are eternal and beginningless. They are inseparable. Religion shows the way to attain God or salvation or the final beatitude, or freedom from births and deaths.

Religion contains philosophy, mythology, ethics, etc. It prescribes various kinds of Sadhana or religious practices to suit various types of Sadhakas.

Real religion is one. It is the religion of the heart. It is the religion of love. It is the religion of the Vedas or Vedanta. It is the religion of Silence. It is life everlasting in the Imperishable Absolute or the Eternal. Real religion is transcendental. It is above the senses, the mind and the intel-

lect. It is *Turiya* or sleepless sleep, where there is neither sound nor colour, neither day nor night, neither light nor darkness, neither pleasure nor pain, neither virtue nor vice.

Religion consists in doing good to others, in the practice of love, mercy, truthfulness, and purity in all walks of life. Religion is practical philosophy; philosophy is theoretical religion. Philosophy is for ever searching, inquiring, questioning. Religion is sensing, realising, experiencing.

One religion is as good as another. One road or path to the Supreme is as good as any other road or path. Cows have different colours, but the colour of milk is one. There are different kinds of roses, but the scent is one. Religion is one, but many are its forms of practice. Diversity is the order of creation. Religion is no exception to it.

## NEED FOR RELIGION

A religious life is the greatest of all blessings. It lifts a man from the mire of worldliness, impurity, infidelity. Intellect is vain if it is not illuminated by religion. Religion does what philosophy can never do. If you live in accordance with the rules of religion, you will attain wisdom, immortality, everlasting peace and eternal bliss.

Religion is the foundation of society, the source of all goodness and happiness, the basis of the virtue and prosperity of the individual, and through the individuals, of the nation. Civilisation, order, morality—all that elevate man and give peace to the nation—are the fruits of the practice of religion.

## THE TRUTH ABOUT RELIGION

The ultimate source of religion is God.

God is the primary source of all knowledge. By a comparative study of the principal religions of the world, you will understand that the newer religions can be traced to older ones, the older ones to still older ones and so on, till you reach the most ancient and primitive religion of humanity.

There has never been any real invention in the realm of religion. The fundamental principles which constitute its essence are as old as the human race or this world. They were revealed by God to the Rishis or Seers in the beginning of creation or Kalpa. They are found in the Vedas, which are admitted as the oldest religious books or scriptures in the library of mankind.

Scientists may have wonderful new discoveries or inventions in the realm of matter but there will never come a time when you will be able to know any new truth about God. You may have a better understanding, a more thorough realisation of the nature of God, but you will never be able to discover a new attribute of God or Brahman, because the knowledge of God has not been originated by the human mind. So is the case also with all religious knowledge. There never has been, there never shall be, any real invention or discovery in the sphere of religion. There never was a religious founder, who had invented a new religion, or revealed a new truth. These founders are all transmitters only, but not original makers. There has been no entirely new religion, since the beginning of the world. Religion is ultimately of divine origin.

### VEDAS—THE SOURCE OF ALL RELIGIONS

The Vedas are the ultimate source of all religions. They are the fountainhead

from which the stream of religious knowledge has flowed through the channels of Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Buddhism, Christianity and Mohammedanism. The common truths and principles of all religions are ultimately derived from the Vedas only. All religions in essence can be traced ultimately to the Vedas.

At the present moment all religions contain a mixture of truth, which is divine, and error which is human. The fundamentals or essentials of all religions are the same. There is difference only in the non-essentials. The apparent differences in religions are due to a misconception or misconstruction of the long-forgotten truth of the Vedas on which they are ultimately founded. All systems of religion are equally divine and true. The conflicting points are all due to misconception and misconstruction of the truths on account of prejudice, bigotry, lack of purity of heart and subtlety and purity of intellect, and perverted condition of the intellect of people.

The great majority of religions had their origin in prehistoric times. Hence there are no genuine documents or trustworthy traditions concerning them.

### RISE OF DIFFERENT RELIGIONS

Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Buddhism, Christianity and Mohammedanism are the six great religions of the world. There is no founder for Hinduism. All the other religions have their founders. They are named after the name of the founder. Jainism is only another form of Buddhism. Sikhism is based chiefly on Hinduism and partly on Mohammedanism. Brahmoism is born of Hinduism and Christianity and so on with other minor religions.

Whenever any important truth of religion was suppressed by the arrogance and selfishness of the priestly class or forgotten



through the ignorance of the people, there appeared a great Saint or Prophet or Religious Teacher. He emphasised that truth, removed the dross which had concealed or obscured it and made it shine in its original brilliance, purity, splendour and glory.

In this way every new religion was only an endeavour to reform the older religion as it then existed and a protest against its abuses.

When in olden times people forgot all about the Vedic monotheism, there arose Zoroaster. He preached the worship of one God, Ahura Mazda, and condemned the worship of Devas.

When the religion of the Vedas degenerated into a blind observance of rites and sacrifice of animals, when the Sudras were treated with contempt by the Brahmins, there appeared the compassionate Buddha, who stopped killing of animals and raised the status of Sudras.

When the priests of Judaism became arrogant, there arose Jesus to purify Judaism. When Christianity had also degenerated into idolatry and superstition, there appeared Mohamed to preach his monotheism.

When Hinduism degenerated on account of creeping in of superstitious beliefs and false worship, various reformers appeared to purge Hinduism of its superstitions and wrong beliefs and observances.

Sri Sankara appeared to remove wrong beliefs and abuses in Buddhism and Jainism and established Kevala Adwaita or absolute monism. Sri Ramanuja appeared to teach Bhakti and make people practise devotion and realise God while remaining in the world.

If people become cruel, a teacher like Buddha appears to preach *Ahimsa* or non-injury. If they become timid, another tea-

cher like Guru Govind Singh comes to infuse courage in them. If they become inclined towards rigorous *Tapas*, a teacher like Ramanuja comes and preaches "Realise while enjoying in the world".

Thus all great religious teachers were original reformers. They tried to improve the existing religions and to do good in their own way to suit the time and condition of the society in which they were born.

### THE UNITY THAT UNDERLIES ALL RELIGIONS

All prophets are messengers of God. They are great Yogins and realised souls, who have had divine, intuitive perception of God. Their words are infallible and sacred. The Koran or the Zend-Avesta or the Bible is as much a sacred book as the Bhagavad-Gita. All contain the essence of divine wisdom. Ahuramazda, Isvara, Allah, Jehovah are different names for one God.

Truth is neither Hindu nor Mohammedan, nor Buddhist nor Christian! Truth is one, homogeneous, eternal substance. The follower of the religion of Truth walks on the path of light, peace, wisdom, power and bliss.

Man forgets all about his religion on account of ignorance, or lust for power and greed. He has become irreligious. So he has come down to the level of a brute. He has lost all sense of morality. He does havoc. He creates mischief. He stabs, loots, and burns houses. The law of the jungle prevails.

Many preach Buddhism, but no one gives up desires and Himsa. Many preach Christianity, but no one practises love and forgiveness. Many preach Islam, but no one recognises the brotherhood of man. Many preach Hinduism, but no one realises the Divinity in all. Preaching has become the livelihood of men, while practice has

become their object of scorn.

Hence the world is wicked, not for want of truth, nor on account of religions; but, alas, it is wicked for the lack of true followers of these ideals and religions.

What is needed is proper education of the followers of all religions. Place the practical tenets of their own religion before the followers of that religion, and devise ways and means of enabling them to ex-

press these tenets in their daily life. Without practice, idealism creates fatalism in man. Unless knowledge alters one's life, it is useless. Selflessness and love are not creeds to be taught, but ideals to be exemplified, demonstrated and radiated. Therefore, let everyone practise his own religion and strive to attain the goal. Let religion create saints and Yogins, rather than Mandirs, Masjids and Churches.

## Hinduism

### INTRODUCTION

Hinduism is the religion of the Hindus. It is the oldest of all living religions. Hinduism is not a man-made religion. It was not founded by any single person. It is not based on a set of dogmas preached by a particular set of teachers. It was not started as a system, like Islam or Christianity. It is the product of the seers of the Vedas. It was developed from age to age by the teachings of Avataras, Rishis, Vedas, the Upanishads, the Gita and the Itihasas. It will exist as long as the world lasts. There is a peculiar, mysterious spiritual force that is ingrained in the heart of every Hindu.

Hinduism is also known by the names Sanatana Dharma and Vaidika Dharma. Sanatana Dharma means the eternal religion, the Ancient Law. Vaidika Dharma means the religion of the Vedas. The Vedas are the foundational scriptures of Hinduism.

### A RELIGION OF FREEDOM

Hinduism allows absolute freedom to the rational mind of man. Hinduism never demands any undue restraint upon the free-

dom of human reason, the freedom of thought, feeling and will of man.

Hinduism is a religion of freedom. It allows the widest freedom in matters of faith and worship. It allows absolute freedom to the human reason and heart with regard to questions such as the nature of God, soul, creation, form of worship, and goal of life. It does not force anybody to accept particular dogmas or forms of worship. It allows everybody to reflect, investigate, enquire and cogitate. Hence, all sorts of religious faiths, various forms of worship or Sadhana, diverse kinds of rituals and customs, have found their honourable place side by side within Hinduism, and are cultured and developed in harmonious relationship with one another.

Hinduism, unlike other religions, does not dogmatically assert that the final emancipation is possible only through its means and not through any other. It is only a means to an end, and all means which will ultimately lead to the end are equally approved.

The religious hospitality of Hinduism is proverbial. Hinduism is extremely catholic and liberal. This is the fundamental fea-



ture of Hinduism. Hinduism pays respects to all religions. It does not revile any other religion. It accepts and honours truth, wherever it may come from and whatever garb it may put on.

### HINDU MYTHOLOGY

In every religion, there are three parts, viz., philosophy, mythology and ritual. Philosophy is the essence of religion. It sets forth its basic principles or fundamental doctrines or tenets, the goal, and the means of attaining it. Mythology explains and illustrates philosophy by means of legendary lives of great men or of supernatural beings. Ritual gives a still more concrete form to philosophy so that everyone may understand it. Ritual consists of forms and ceremonies.

Mythology is a part of every religion. Mythology is concretised philosophy. Mythology is the science which investigates myths or fables or legends founded on remote events, especially those made in the early period of a people's existence. Mythology inspires the readers through precepts and laudable examples, and goads them to attain perfection or the highest ideal. The abstract teachings and subtle ideas are made highly interesting through the garb of stories, parables, legends, allegories and narratives. The sublime and abstract philosophical ideas and ideals of Hinduism are taken straight to the heart of the masses through impressive stories. Mythology is slightly mixed up with a little history. It is difficult to make a fine distinction between history and mythology.

There are great truths behind the ancient mythology of Hinduism. You cannot ignore a thing simply because it has a garb of mythology. Do not argue. Shut up your mouth. Keep your intellect at a respectable distance when you study mytho-

logy. Intellect is a hindrance. It will delude you. Give up arrogance, vanity. Cultivate love for imagery. Sit like a child and open your heart freely. You will comprehend the great truths revealed by mythology. You will penetrate into the hearts of the Rishis and sages who wrote the mythology. You will really enjoy mythology now.

You study geography through maps. There is no real country or town in a map, but it helps you to know a great deal about the different countries. Similar is the case with myths. You can grasp the subtle, philosophical truths through myths only. The object of myth and legend is merely to lure the mind to the truths of religion.

### EMPHASIS ON PRACTICE

Hinduism is not a religion of mere theories. It is eminently practical. In no religion will you find such a variety of Yoga practised, and such sublime unique philosophy expounded.

Hinduism provides spiritual food and Yoga Sadhana for all sorts of people to suit their temperaments, capacities, tastes, stages of spiritual development, and conditions of life. It prescribes Yoga Sadhana even for a scavenger or a cobbler to attain God-realisation, while doing his ordinary avocation in the world. Hindu Yoga and Vedanta teachers lay great stress on self-restraint, *Tapas*, renunciation and practical Sadhana, which are best calculated to control the mind and the senses and unfold the Divinity within or attain Self-realisation.

Religion is the practical aspect of philosophy. Philosophy is the rational aspect of religion. The philosophy of Hinduism is not armchair philosophy. It is not meant for intellectual curiosity and vain discussion. Hindu philosophy is a way of life.

The philosopher of Hinduism seriously reflects after hearing the Srutis, does Atma-vichara, constantly meditates, and then attains Self-realisation or Atma-sakshatkara. Moksha is his goal. He attempts to attain Jivanmukti now and here.

### LAW OF KARMA

The law of Karma is one of the fundamental doctrines of not only Hinduism, but also of Buddhism and Jainism. As a man sows, so shall he reap. This is the law of Karma.

Desires produce Karma. You work and exert to acquire the objects of your desire. Karma produces its fruits as pain and pleasure. You will have to take births after births to reap the fruits of your Karmas. This is the law of Karma.

The doctrine of reincarnation or transmigration of souls is a fundamental tenet of Hinduism. You will not cease to exist after death. Before this birth you have passed through countless lives. The word 'reincarnation' literally means coming again into a physical body. The individual soul takes again a mortal vehicle. The word 'transmigration' means passing from one plane to another—passing into a new body.

The doctrine of rebirth is a corollary to the law of Karma. The differences of disposition that are found between one individual and another must be due to one's respective past actions. Past action implies past birth. Further, all your Karmas cannot certainly bear fruit in this birth alone. Therefore, there must be another birth for enjoying the remaining actions. Each soul has a series of births and deaths. Births and deaths will continue till you attain knowledge of the Self.

You do not come into the world in total forgetfulness and in utter darkness. You

are born with certain memories and habits acquired in the previous births. Desires take their origin from previous experiences. We find that none is born without desire. Every being is born with some desires, which are associated with the things enjoyed by him in the past life. The desire proves the existence of his soul in the previous lives.

Man contains within himself infinite possibilities. The magazine of power and wisdom is within him. He has to unfold the Divinity within. This is the object of living and dying.

### HINDU SECTS

A foreigner is struck with astonishment when he hears about the diverse sects and creeds of Hinduism. But, these varieties are really an ornament to Hinduism. They, certainly, are not its defects. There are various types of mind and temperament. So, there should be various faiths also. This is but natural. This is the cardinal tenet of Hinduism. There is room in Hinduism for all types of souls—from the highest to the lowest—for their growth and evolution.

The term Hinduism is most elastic. It includes a number of sects and cults, allied, but different in many important points. Hinduism has, within its fold, various schools of Vedanta, Saivism, Saktism, Vaishnavism, etc. It has various cults and creeds. It is more a league of religions than a single religion with a definite creed. It is a fellowship of faiths. It is a federation of philosophies. It accommodates all types of men. It prescribes spiritual food for everybody, according to his qualification and growth. This is the beauty of this magnanimous religion. This is the glory of Hinduism. Hence there is no conflict among the various cults and creeds.

Sanatan Dharmists, Arya Samajists,



Deva Samajists, Jains, Sikhs and Brahmo Samajists are all Hindus only. Despite all the differences of metaphysical doctrines, modes of religious discipline, and forms of ritualistic practices and social habits prevalent in the Hindu society, there is an essential uniformity in the conception of religion, and in the outlook on life and the world, among all sections of Hindus.

### GLORY OF HINDUISM

Mohammedan emperors ruled India for seven hundred years. The British ruled India for two hundred years. Some joined Islam through force. The Mohammedan emperors and the British were not able to convert the whole of India. Still the glory of Hinduism persists. The culture of Hinduism prevails. Nothing can shake its greatness and root.

Hinduism is neither asceticism nor illusionism, neither polytheism nor pantheism. It is a synthesis of all types of religious experiences. It is a whole and complete view of life. It is characterised by wide toleration, deep humanity and high spiritual purpose. It is free from fanaticism. That is the reason why it has survived the attacks of the followers of other great religions of the world.

Hinduism is extremely catholic, liberal, tolerant and elastic. No religion is so very elastic and tolerant like Hinduism. Hinduism is very stern and rigid regarding the fundamentals. It is very elastic in readjusting to the externals and non-essentials. That is the reason why it has succeeded in living through millennia.

The foundation of Hinduism has been laid on the bedrock of spiritual truths. The entire structure of Hindu life is built on eternal truths, the findings of the Hindu Rishis or seers. That is the reason why this structure has lasted through scores of centuries.

Hinduism stands unrivalled in the depth and grandeur of its philosophy. Its ethical teachings are lofty, unique and sublime. It is highly flexible and adapted to every human need. It is a perfect religion by itself. It is not in need of anything from any other religion. No other religion has produced so many great saints, great patriots, great warriors, great Pativratas. The more you know of the Hindu religion, the more you will honour and love it. The more you study it, the more it will enlighten you and satisfy your heart.

### *Sivananda on 'Peace'—8*

All over the world, great conferences are held for bringing about universal peace, universal brotherhood and universal religion. It is the vanity of man that goads him to reform society without first reforming himself. Vanity rules the world. When two vain people meet, there is friction and quarrel.

In the case of social reform, self-styled enlightened men started interfering with the customs and manners of people, in an effort to civilise them. The people lost their old moorings, and the reformers could not offer new, sound ones. Masses of people drifted away into chaos. How can blind men lead other blind men?

# Buddhism

## INTRODUCTION

'Om Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Samma-Sambuddhasa!' 'Honour to the Blessed One, the Holy One, All-Wise!'

*Buddham saranam gacchami:*

*Dhammam saranam gacchami:*

*Sangham saranam gacchami:*

To the Buddha for Refuge I go:

To the Teaching for Refuge I go:

To the Order for Refuge I go:

Buddha was born on the border of Nepal about 620 B.C. and died about 543 B.C. at Kusinagara in Oudh.

Buddhism was founded by Gautama Sakya Muni, the rebel child of Hinduism. It sprang up directly from Hinduism. Buddha never thought of founding a new religion. He made no new discovery. He was proclaiming only the ancient and pure form of religion which had prevailed among the Hindus.

The pure and noble religion of the Vedas and the Upanishads had degenerated into dead forms, unmeaning rites and ceremonies. The Brahmins claimed honour merely by their birth. They neglected the study of the Vedas and the practice of virtue. The Brahmins were treated with undue leniency, and the Sudras with undue severity. In order that flesh-eating might have the sanction of religion, animals were slaughtered and sacrificed in Yajnas. Such was the state of society at the time when Buddha appeared. His tender and loving heart could not bear the shedding of so much innocent blood in the sacred name of religion. Buddha declared that merit, and not birth, determined the position of a man in society. The persecuted Sudras joined him in large numbers and he unconsciously

became the founder of a new faith.

Buddhism is the religion of earnest, undaunted effort. Buddha demands from you faith in your own Self, in your own latent forces. Without this faith, nothing can be achieved. The first words of Buddha, after his Enlightenment, were: "Wide open are the gates of Immortality. Ye that have ears to hear, release your faith".

## BUDDHA, THE APOSTLE OF AHIMSA AND LOVE

Buddha was the greatest benevolent man or humanitarian which the world has ever produced. He is one without a second. Benevolence and humanitarianism are the key-notes of all religious movements of the world; but, the benevolence and humanitarian spirit and work of Buddha stand unrivalled in the religious history of the world.

Buddha abandoned his kingdom and went about begging his bread through the streets of India, and preached for the good of men and animals. He had a heart as wide as the sky or the ocean. He did not want heaven. He did not want money or throne. What an exalted selfless Yogi he was!

Many Rishis and prophets have preached the doctrine of love and Ahimsa, but there has never been, in the entire history of the world's ethical thought, a greater affirmation of the principle of Ahimsa and love than has been done by Buddha. No one has possessed such a tender, kind and merciful heart as Buddha. Hence, he is enshrined even now in the hearts of millions of people. His heart throbbed severely and melted when he saw a little suffering in an ant or a worm or a dog. He gave up



his body as food for a hungry ferocious animal in his previous birth. Several acts of kindness done in several births made him a Buddha in his last birth.

### THE NOBLE EIGHTFOLD PATH

The gospel of Buddha is simple, and yet wonderfully profound. Buddha analysed all experiences, and the world process as it appears to all of us, with a scientific frame of mind. He found out that everything is mutable, changing, and impermanent or transitory. There is suffering, disharmony, discord and discontent everywhere in life, on account of the impermanence or transitoriness of things around. This universal experience of sorrow or *Dukkha* is the starting point in Buddha's thought. Buddha did not preach pessimism. He was wonderfully optimistic. He emphatically asserts that there is a way out of sorrow, and a heaven of eternal bliss, within the reach of every man.

The four cardinal truths or principles which Buddha preached are: that there is suffering in the world; that the cause of suffering is *Tanha* or craving; that the extinction of craving leads to cessation of suffering; and that this extinction of craving can be achieved by the Noble Eightfold Path.

Buddha lays great emphasis on the way of life. He avoids the two extremes of self-indulgence and self-mortification, and prescribes the Middle Way. He said: "There is a Middle Way, O recluses, avoiding these two extremes, discovered by the Tathagata—a path which opens the eyes and bestows understanding, which leads to peace of mind, to the higher wisdom, to full enlightenment, to Nirvana."

What is this Middle Way? It is the Noble Eightfold Path which constitutes, so to say, the entire ethical code of Buddha.

The Noble Eightfold Path consists of the practice of right belief or right understanding or right views; right aspiration; right speech; right conduct or right action; right living or right means of livelihood; right exertion; right mindfulness or attentiveness; and right concentration or meditation.

These are the eight steps in the Way of Life presented by Buddha which annihilate suffering of all kinds and lead to the attainment of *Nirvana* or emancipation. The Noble Eightfold Path destroys lust, anger, greed, malice and other evils, and purifies the heart. Then dawns *Bodhi* or Enlightenment which bestows perfect everlasting peace, eternal bliss and immortality.

The word 'Nirvana' literally means 'going out'. It signifies a spiritual experience full of peace and bliss, which is characterised by the 'going out' from the heart of the three fires of lust, ill-will and dullness.

Nirvana is not utter annihilation. Nirvana is total extinction of all that is base in us.

Buddha insisted upon the inexorable Law of Cause and Effect. He said to the people that they lived in a world in which causes always produce their natural and necessary effects and that the consequences of their conduct would, therefore, follow them wherever they went. He said that virtue has its own reward and vice its own punishment and that whatever is done inevitably reacts on the character and through the character affects for weal or woe the destiny of the Soul.

The religion of Buddha is a pathway to the Nirvanic beatitude. It is a way, and not a creed. It is a scheme of spiritual development, and not a set of doctrines.

## BUDDHA—PREACHER OF PRACTICAL RELIGION

Buddha came to the world to show the path of righteousness, to destroy the path of error, and to break down sorrow. Buddhism is not agnosticism or atheism. Buddhism is not nihilism. Buddha did not deny God. He only said: "Do not bother about questions like 'Is there God?', 'Do I exist?', 'Is the world real or not?'. Do not waste your time and energy in useless discussions. Become a practical religious man. Purify your heart. Control the mind. Lead a virtuous life. You will attain *Nirvana* or emancipation or eternal bliss."

To accuse Buddha as an atheist or agnostic is simply foolish. Buddha found no use in metaphysical wrangling. He declined to enter into metaphysics. Is there God or no God? Is life eternal or non-eternal? These questions were set aside as not requiring an answer for the attainment of *Nirvana*. The immediate great problem for Buddha was suffering and annihilation of suffering. He asked his followers not to bother about the transcendental questions. He set aside all those things which did not help towards the attainment of the goal. He thought it wise to give his followers a way, and not a creed. He thought that speculation about the nature of the ultimate reality was an unnecessary drag on the path of truth and spiritual attainment. The vital and fundamental thing is not to discuss about the ultimate truth, but to tread the path which takes man out of the world of pain and suffering into the supreme abode of eternal bliss and immorta-

lity. The nature of the ultimate truth is beyond the reach of mind and speech. If Buddha refused to define the nature of the Absolute, or if he contented himself with negative definitions, it is only to show that the Absolute or the Ultimate is above all definitions.

## CONCLUSION

The present-day world needs very badly the teachings of Lord Buddha. Everywhere we see preparations for the destruction of the human race and its culture. Fear of the atomic bomb is causing restlessness everywhere. Scientists and dictators have neither rest nor peace. There is mistrust amongst the leaders of the nations. Malice, hatred and prejudice have grown to such a large extent that the very structure of human civilisation seems to be crumbling. The one great ambition of every nation is to possess more atomic bombs. Scientists are working day and night in the laboratories to release as much atomic energy as possible to destroy people. What a horrible state of affairs! It is really shocking. The only way by which the world can be saved lies in a return to the great principles of *Ahimsa* and *Maitri* inculcated by Lord Buddha and Maharshi Patanjali. Hatred can never be cured by hatred. It can only be cured by love. This is a lesson which the world has to learn again and again. Take a solemn vow now to meet hatred with love, and malice with goodwill. This is the best way to pay our homage to the great sage Lord Buddha, the apostle of love and *Ahimsa*, the saviour of the world, the Avatara of Lord Vishnu.

## *Sivananda on 'Peace'—9*

No piece of paper called a treaty can establish peace in this world. The way of peace is very simple and straight; it is the way of Love and Truth.



# Jainism

## INTRODUCTION

"Jain" or more properly speaking "Jaina" means a follower of Jina, which is applied to those persons who have conquered the lower nature, passion, hatred, etc. The word 'Jain' comes from the word 'Jina' which means a conqueror. 'Jina' comes from the root 'Ji'—'to conquer'. It means conquering the passions. It does not mean conquering nations. The passions are considered as enemies of the soul. They taint the natural qualities of the soul, obscure right belief, cause false knowledge and wrong conduct. Lust, anger, pride and greed are considered as the major passions.

The chief point in the Jaina creed is the reverence paid to holy men, who have raised themselves to divine perfection through long discipline. The Jina or the 'conquering saint', who has conquered all worldly desires is with Jains what the Buddha or the perfectly enlightened saint is with Buddhas. He is also called Jineswara (chief of the Jinas), Arhat, "the venerable", Tirthankara or the saint who has made the passage of the world, Sarvajna (omniscient), Bhagavat (holy one). 'Tirtha' literally means a ford, a means of crossing over. It metaphorically denotes a spiritual guide or philosophy which enables one to cross over the ocean of recurring births in this world. 'Kara' means 'one who makes'. The word Tirthankara means a 'Jain Holy Teacher'.

According to the belief of the Jains, only the omniscient are able to give a right code of rules of life. These teachers or Tirthankaras are not creators or rulers of the world. They are pure divine souls, who have attained perfection. They never again take human birth.

Mahavira is not the founder of Jainism. He revived the Jain doctrines. He was more a reformer than the founder of the faith. He was the first active propagator. He was the twenty-fourth Tirthankara. He is claimed to have been omniscient. 'Maha' means 'great' and 'Vira' means 'a hero'. Parasvanath was the twenty-third. The first of these twenty-four was named Rishabha Dev.

The idols which represent the Tirthankaras are like that of Buddha in a meditative posture. Jainism is a representative of Buddhistic ideas. It has much in common with Buddhism. It is a near relative of Buddhism, if not its actual descendant.

The Jain theory is based on reason. It is based on right faith, right knowledge, right conduct, tempered with mercy. Jainism is not a theistic system in the sense of the belief in the existence of a God as the Creator and the Ruler of the world. The highest being in the Jain philosophy is a person and not a Being without attributes like the Brahman of the Vedanta.

## JAIN PHILOSOPHY

The Jain philosophy bases its doctrine on the absolute necessity of conquering the lower nature for the realisation of Truth.

The Jains do not accept the authority of the Vedas.

Jainism divides the whole universe into two main divisions viz., sentient beings (*Chetana*, also called Jiva or Soul) and non-sentient things (*Jada*, also called Ajiva or non-soul). Soul is that element which thinks, knows and feels. It is the divine element in the living being. The true nature of the soul is right knowledge, right faith and right conduct. The soul is under-

going evolution and involution, so long as it is subject to transmigration. Whatever is not soul is non-soul (Ajiva).

The combination of the Jiva and the Ajiva causes all diversities in this universe. Their interaction or interplay is the cause of the world-process or evolution. When the soul is stripped of all its Ajiva bondage, it becomes pure and attains its ultimate Mukti.

### GOD

Jainism does not regard God as a Creator. God in the sense of an extra cosmic personal Creator has no place in the Jain philosophy. But there is a subtle essence underlying all substances, conscious and unconscious, which becomes the cause of all modifications. This is termed God. The Jain idea of Godhood is the perfected Soul (Siddha), the liberated soul (Mukta). The Jains worship these liberated souls (Tirthankaras) who have destroyed all Karmas and attained salvation, as their God. They accept those enlightened souls only, who have abandoned all worldly connections, who lead the life of true Sadhus, who have controlled all selfish desires, as their spiritual teachers. They accept that only as the true religion, which is promulgated by them.

The Jain Tirthankara is free from faults. He is true God. He is the knower of all things and the revealer of Dharma. He is free from the 18 kinds of blemishes viz., hunger, thirst, senility, disease, birth, death, fear, pride, attachment, aversion, infatuation, worry, conceit, hatred, uneasiness, sweat, sleep and surprise.

The Jain philosophy teaches that each soul is a separate individuality, uncreated and eternal in existence. It has lived from time immemorial in some embodied state. It evolves from the lower to the higher con-

dition through the Law of Karma, or cause and effect. It takes fresh bodies after death so long as the Karmas or forces generated in previous lives have not been fully worked out. Eventually it unfolds its absolute purity by breaking the bonds of Karma and attains perfection, Nirvana or Mukti. The individuality is not merged into anything. It is not annihilated also. It attains right realisation, right knowledge and right life. The perfected soul is neither masculine, feminine, nor neuter.

Every soul is potentially omniscient. Consciousness is the very nature of the soul. Soul is a pure embodiment of knowledge. The soul has infinite potentialities. It has infinite capacity for removing Karma-bondages.

### WORLD

The world is beginningless and endless. There is no extra cosmic creator or ruler of the world. There are six real substances which constitute the world. These six are space, time, matter, souls, Dharmastikaya (fulcrum of motion) and Adharmastikaya (fulcrum of stability, or rest). Space serves as a receptacle for the other substances. It is infinite. Time is real. It is beginningless and endless. Material objects consist of atoms.

### DOCTRINE OF KARMA AND REINCARNATION

The only enemy of the soul is the force of its own Karmas (actions). It can destroy the Karma by becoming fully self-conscious. When the bonds of Karma are destroyed, the soul attains Mukti. It cannot be overcome afresh by Karma.

The doctrine of Karma occupies a very prominent place in the Jain philosophy. *Punya* is the effect of virtuous deeds (*Subha Karma*). *Papa* is the effect of evil deeds (*Asubha Karma*). If a man has



abundance of good actions, his happiness increases; if he has abundance of evil deeds, his miseries and pain increase. When both the good and evil deeds are eliminated, he attains emancipation or Moksha.

The doctrine of Karma is the companion doctrine of the transmigration of the soul. "With what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again." "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall be also reaped." These are but the corollaries of that most intricate Law of Karma. This solves the problem of the inequality and seeming injustice in the world. A student of the Jain Karma philosophy can trace any effect to a particular Karma. Those who by right faith, right knowledge and right conduct destroy all Karmas, attain perfection. They become divine and are called *Jinas*. Those *Jinas* who, in every age, preach the law and establish the order, are called *Tirthankaras*.

The Jains believe in reincarnation. The doctrine of reincarnation alone can explain the inequality seen in the world. Why is one man born rich and the other poor? Why is one man healthy and strong, and another man weak and unhealthy? Why one man lives for 30 years, and another for 85 years? Why one man is a king and another a labourer in the field? What is the cause of this apparent injustice? *Karma*. Good Karmas give good birth. Evil Karmas give rise to low births. The doctrine of reincarnation is another grand doctrine of the Jain philosophy. It is the companion doctrine of Doctrine of Karma.

### TRIPLE JEWELS

Right faith, right knowledge and right conduct constitute the path to Nirvana. Wrong beliefs, wrong knowledge and wrong conduct prolong the bondage of the souls. The belief that the Jaina *Tirthankaras* are the true Gods, the Jaina *Sastras* the true

scriptures and the Jaina saints the true Preceptors is called the *Right faith*.

*Right knowledge*: Right knowledge reveals the nature of things as it is and with certainty.

*Right conduct* (Jain ethics): That noble soul who has right knowledge on account of right faith begins to practise the rules of right conduct, to attain the state of desirelessness by eradicating likes and dislikes, which destroy the five kinds of sin viz. *Himsa* (injury), falsehood, theft, unchastity and attachment to mundane objects.

The universal principles of Jainism are *Ahimsa* (non-injury), *Satyam* (truthfulness), *Asteya* (non-stealing), *Brahmacharya* (celibacy) and *Aparigraha* (non-covetousness). This corresponds to the *Yama* of Raja Yoga of Patanjali Maharshi. Jainism preaches universal brotherhood, equality of all beings. It enjoins on all its followers the practice of the greatest self-control.

The five *Mahavratas* or great Commandments for Jain ascetics are:—not to kill, i.e., to protect all life; not to lie; not to take that which is not given; to abstain from sexual intercourse; to renounce all interest in worldly things, particularly to call nothing one's own.

The Jain doctrines are summed up in the maxim '*Ahimsa Paramo Dharmah*'. Non-injury to living beings is the highest religion. *Ahimsa* is the foundational tenet of Jainism. Jainism always tends to protect and advance the interests of all kinds of living beings.

One should not kill, tell lies, steal, be unchaste or over-greedy for possession of property. This constitutes Jain ethics. The Jains are vegetarians.

According to the Jain philosophy, all

evils are due to *Raga* and *Dvesha* (attachment and hatred). Raja Yoga philosophy of Patanjali Maharshi, the Nyaya philosophy of Gautama and Vedanta also say the same thing. Attachment produces *Moha* or infatuation. *Moha* causes entanglement. Separation from the object causes pain and suffering. Through *Dvesha* man injures others. Attachment also is as much an evil as hatred. Both are causes of bondage. Both taint the mind.

### MOKSHA

Moksha is the total elimination of Karma from the Jiva. The Jiva gets freedom as soon as it attains this stage. The liberated state is known as Mukti. The Jiva attains perfect, unlimited, eternal

happiness, untouched by cares and worries. Moksha implies freedom from matter. The liberated soul goes to the abode Siddhakshetra, which is at the top of this world.

The individual by his own efforts liberates all his latent qualities, which were obscured by foreign elements (Karmas). This state of purity or perfection is attained only in the human life through the triple jewels, viz. right faith, right knowledge and right conduct.

The soul becomes pure by the removal of matter. In this condition there are no pain, misery, disease, old age or death, fatigue, discomfort. It is a condition of immortality, infinite knowledge, eternal uninterrupted bliss.

## Sikhism

### INTRODUCTION

Sikhism was founded in the fifteenth century by Sri Guru Nanak Dev, the first of Gurus born in Talwandi (now Nankana Sahib) in Seikhpura in the district of Lahore (in Pakistan). He made no attempt to build up a new religion. He tried to have a unifying religion to embrace both Hindus and Mohammedans. He insisted on the worship of one God, the Creator and the Supreme Ruler, Who is all and apart from Whom any thought of individual existence is only *Maya*.

Guru Nanak tried his level best to join the Hindus and the Musalmans in one league of love to God and service to man. The cardinal doctrines of Sikhism are the unity or oneness of God and the brotherhood of man.

Love to God and the teacher is the

very basis and the very root of Sikhism. In its philosophy it is Hindu. It is reformatory in its nature. Sikhism is a movement essentially of Bhakti. Guru Nanak taught that one can obtain his emancipation through the name of Hari. Guru Gobind gave to the Sikhs their great military organisation. He was a great military organiser.

The word 'Sikh' simply means a disciple. It is derived from the Sanskrit word 'Shishya' or disciple. Sikhism enjoins that obedience to the Guru brings release from future birth, and the attainment of eternal bliss and immortality.

A Sikh is admitted to the privilege of the Community only when he received the *Pahul* (baptism). When he is baptised, he adopts the five *Kakas*—the 'Kes' (uncut hair), the 'Kachh' (short drawers), the 'Kara' (iron bangle), the 'Kirpan' (steel dag-



ger) and the 'Kangha' (small comb worn in the hair).

The Sikhs are divided into many subjects viz. Udasis, Nirmalas and the Akalis. The Udasis are an ascetic order of the Nanakshahi Sikhs. The Nirmalas are celibates. They are also an ascetic order of the Nanakshahis. The Akalis are the most fanatical of all the Sikh sects. They wear a distinctive dress of blue and a black turban.

### GRANTH SAHIB

(Holy Scripture of Sikhs)

Guru Nanak invented Gurumukhi language, which is the corrupt form of Hindi. It contains 53 alphabets. The whole Granth Sahib is in Gurumukhi language.

The sacred scriptures or Holy Granths are two. One was compiled by the fifth Guru, Guru Arjun Dev. The other is a collection of miscellaneous hymns of the tenth Guru, Guru Govind Singh and of translations of Sanskrit books made by various others under the orders of Guru Govind Singh. A part of the Granth contains an abstract of the Ramayana, and the Srimad Bhagavata.

The Holy Granth, popularly known as the Adi Granth, contains the hymns of the first five Gurus, with a few selections from the hymns of different contemporary saints. These were all collected, arranged and formed into a volume called "Guru Granth Sahib" by the fifth Guru.

The teachings of Guru Nanak are contained in the first book of the Adi-Granth. Nanak was succeeded by Angad, Amardas, Ram Das, Arjun, Har Gobind, Har Rai, Har Kishan, Tej Bahadur and Govind Singh, in turn. These are the ten Gurus or Preceptors of the Sikhs.

Amritsar in Punjab is the sacred city of the Sikhs, as Benares is to the Hindus.

There is the famous Golden Temple in Amritsar, where the Adi Granth Sahib is kept and worshipped. This is the biggest and the most important Gurudwara of the Sikhs and has in its front the famous and most beautiful tank called the "Nectar Tank" or "Amrit Saras" from which the city derives its name. It is regarded with great reverence and devotion and is said to possess miraculous properties. All Sikhs believe that anyone who bathes in it with devotion is at once healed of all afflictions,—physical, mental and moral.

### MAIN PRINCIPLES OF SIKHISM

The following are the main principles on which Sikhism is based:

- i) Belief in the One true God.
- ii) Implicit surrender of one's will to God.
- iii) The practice of righteousness and rectitude.
- iv) Fatherhood of God and universal brotherhood of man.
- v) No worship, but of the Lord God.
- vi) To work in good faith as a duty imposed by God, abandoning fear for a bad result and giving up hope of reward for a good result.

### TEACHINGS OF GURU NANAK

Guru Nanak is a great prophet of Peace. Guru Nanak's teaching breathes the purest spirit of devotion. He takes the view of the Upanishads that there is one Brahman. He declares that the creation is only *Maya* and all things come into being by *Maya*, the power of the Lord. He says that the Jiva or the individual soul is the same in essence as the Supreme. He admits the doctrines of Karma and reincarnation. He says that it is difficult to get a human birth and salvation can be attained in human birth only. Devotion to God is the essence

of all teachings. Without Bhakti all search is vain and fruitless.

### JAPJI (Five Stages)

*Japji* is the great morning prayer of the Sikhs. It is the most sacred collection of the hymns of Guru Nanak. It is the foundation-stone on which the Sikh Scripture, the Holy Guru Granth is built. The hymns were arranged in their present form by the fifth Guru, Sri Guru Arjun Deva. It contains the *Mula-Mantra*, 38 *Pauris* or steps or rungs of the ladder and a *Sloka* which forms the epilogue or conclusion. The Granth Sahib, the Scripture of the Sikhs, begins with *Japji*. The rest of the Granth Sahib is an exposition of the philosophical doctrines and teachings contained in the *Japji*. It shows the way for reaching God. *Sohila* is repeated at bed time.

In the *Japji* Guru Nanak has given a lucid, laconic and beautiful description of the stages through which the individual soul must pass, in order to attain eternal peace. There are five stages or *Khandas* viz., (1) Dharam Khand, (2) Gian Khand, (3) Sharan Khand, (4) Karam Khand and (5) Such Khand.

The first stage is Dharam Khand. This is the realm of Duty or Action. Everyone should perform his duties well. Everyone will be judged according to his deeds. His own deeds alone shall avail after his life on this earth.

The second stage is Gian Khand. This is the realm of Knowledge. Man's resolve to do his duty is strengthened now by the knowledge that it is by performing their duty that great souls like Rama and Krishna have attained the abode of everlasting peace.

The soul passes from the Gian Khand to Sharan Khand. This is the Realm of Ecstasy. In this region Dharma becomes natural and spontaneous. It becomes part and parcel of one's nature. It becomes an ingrained habit. There is holy rapture in this realm. There is nothing else but Beauty.

From Sharan Khand the soul passes to Karam Khand. This is the Realm of Power. He acquires power and spiritual strength on account of the character built in the previous three stages. He becomes invincible. His beauty is ineffable. Fear of death vanishes. He is freed from the round of births and deaths. There are God-intoxicated saints here who are in a state of supreme Bliss.

Then he passes on to the final realm, Such Khand, the Abode of Truth, which is near Karam Khand. Here reigns the Formless One. Here the aspirant becomes one with the Supreme Lord. He has attained Godhood. His will has merged in the Cosmic Will or the Divine Will.

The Mulamantra, or sacred prayer of Sikhs, affirms that there is but one God. His Name is true. He is the Creator. He is free from fear and enmity. He is beyond time. He is immortal, unborn, formless and self-existent. He can be realised by the Grace of the Guru. He existed before the beginning of the world. He existed before the beginning of the *Yugas*. He exists now, and says Nanak—He shall exist for ever.

This contains the essence of the Upanishads or Vedanta of the Hindus.

May the blessings of Sri Guru Nanak, the great Prophet of peace, be upon you all!



# Judaism

## INTRODUCTION

Judaism constitutes the religious doctrines and rites of the Jews as enjoined in the laws of Moses.

Judaism is based on Zoroastrianism and it has given rise to two great religions of the world, i.e., Christianity and Mohammedanism. The Mohammedans admit that their religion is founded on Judaism. The Koran also is very clear on this point.

Zoroastrian conception of Ahura Mazda as the Supreme Being is perfectly identical with the idea of Elohim (God) or Jehovah which we find in the books of Old Testament.

Abraham, the Prophet, was the first man who has revealed God to all humanity. He is the Founder of the Hebrew race. Abraham had two sons,—one from Sarah and one from Hagar, the Egyptian woman,—Isaac and Ismael, who are the fathers of Jews and Mohammedans, respectively. Isaac had two sons, viz., Essau and Jacob, and their descendents are the Christians and Jews, respectively. Hebrew is one of the descendents of Jacob; an Israelite, a Jew.

## OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT

The old Testament contains the sacred writings of the ancient Jewish race. The newer portion is known as the New Testament which was begun after the coming of Jesus Christ, more than nineteen hundred years ago.

Long before Jesus came to this world, the Jews wrote and studied their sacred books. These were written in their Hebrew tongue. The old Hebrew books were translated into Greek about two hundred years before the Christian era.

The books of the Jews were arranged

into three main divisions. The first was called "The Law". It dealt with the laws of the world. These books are now the first part of the Bible, viz., Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. The second class was that of the Prophets. It included Joshua, Isaiah and Jeremiah. Psalms and Proverbs constituted third class. The Old Testament contains 39 books.

## JEWISH SECTS

The Law was set forth as a complete system by which men should live. By the Law was understood in a special sense the Pentateuch. Every word of Pentateuch was considered as inspired and an immediate revelation to Moses.

(a) There was a need for explanation of the Law. The *Scribes* were the interpreters of the Law. They explained and applied the rules of the Torah to special cases. The Scribes were recognised as the legislators and the judges of Israel. Their decisions had the force of Law. The first Scribes were priests.

(b) The fraternity of the *Pharisees* were the popular or nationalist party. They believed in the doctrine of immortality, resurrection of the body, the existence of angels and spirits. As religious teachers, they upheld the authority of oral tradition as of equal validity with the written Law. They inclined to fatalism in the question of the freedom of the will. The Zealots represented one extreme side of the Pharisaic movement.

(c) *Sadducees* were aristocratic priests. They held to the letter of the Mosaic revelation. They denied the authority of the oral tradition as interpreted by the Pharisees. They taught complete freedom of the

will in moral action. They had no belief in angels or spirits. They did not accept the doctrine of immortality as a deduction from the Pentateuch.

(d) The *Essenes* followed celibacy, isolation, silence, ceremonial ablutions and abstinence from animal food. They practised asceticism. They did worship of the sun and the angels. They believed in the dualistic theory of good and evil and the symbolism of light. They abstained from sacrifices and temple worship.

### TORAH

The Prophets of Israel were the great religious leaders who brought great progress in Hebraic thought. Rabbis also were authoritative teachers. They worked very hard in the field of Torah. They produced the massive Talmudic literature. They were the representatives of Pharisaism. Talmud is indispensable for a knowledge of Hebraic thought.

This is the key word in the life and literature of the Hebrews. Torah denotes the divine revelation to Israel on Mount Senai as embodied in the five Books of Moses. The Torah (Law) as given to Moses consists of 613 commandments which are the essence of the divine and terrestrial mysteries. Torah indicates a way of life rather than a form of belief.

Moses received the Torah (Law, direction, instruction) on Senai and handed it down to Joshna; Joshna to the elders, the elders to the prophets and the prophets handed it down to the men of the Great Synagogue, a synod of zealous men created by Ezra, the Scribe in the fifth century B.C. The function of the synagogue was to study and teach Torah. The synagogue was a church, a school and a court of justice. It was a house of instruction. It was the chief means by which the teaching and in-

fluence of the Scribes were extended and by which the enactments of the Law were interpreted and enforced.

### THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

God gave His ten commandments to Moses on the Mount Senai. The Lord called unto him out of the mountain and said: "Thus shall thou say to the house of Jacob and tell the children of Israel".

(i) I am the Lord Thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

(ii) Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them; for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.

(iii) Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

(iv) Remember the sabbath-day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath-day and hallowed it.

(v) Honour thy father and thy mo-



ther; that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

(vi) Thou shalt not kill.

(vii) Thou shalt not commit adultery.

(viii) Thou shalt not steal.

(xi) Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

(x) Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbour's.

### MOSAIC COSMOGONY

This is the Mosaic account of Cosmogony. On the first day heaven and earth were created; on the second, firmament and waters; on the third, dry land, grass, the birds and fruit trees; on the fourth, lights, the sun, the moon, the stars; on the fifth, moving creatures, winged fowls, great whales; on the sixth, living creatures, cattle, creepers, beasts, man. In Genesis, the Creation ends with the creation of man.

God created Adam on the sixth day and gave him the charge of the animals. Adam had three children, viz., Cain, Abel and Sheth. Cain killed Abel. The descendants of Cain were drowned in the flood. The descendants of Sheth are all the humanity of the world.

### TENETS OF JUDAISM

The Jews believe in resurrection, in

angels, and in the existence of two powers, viz., God and the Devil or Satan.

The unity of God is the cardinal principle of the religion of the Hebrews. God is bodiless. This is also a doctrine of great importance. God is ever pure and holy. This is third important attribute of God. He is the Creator of the entire world. He is the Father of all His creatures. He is just and merciful. He is without iniquity.

The Jewish saints have spoken much about the efficacy and power of repentance. Man's fate depends in the last resort upon repentance and prayer, particularly prayer with tears, because there is no gate which tears cannot penetrate. The end and aim of all wisdom is repentance. Happy is the man who repents. The gates of repentance never close. Repentance prolongs a man's life. The tears of true repentance are not shed in vain. Even the most righteous shall not attain to so high a place in heaven as the truly repentant. Even an hour spent in repentance with a contrite heart in this world is preferable to a whole life in the world to come. Repent one day sincerely with a contrite heart before you die. After repentance you should not repeat the same wicked act.

The unity of God, the Incorporeality of God and the Holiness of God are the main features of Judaism.

### *Sivananda on 'Peace'—10*

Money cannot give you peace. You can purchase many things, but you cannot purchase peace. You can buy soft beds, but you cannot buy sleep. You can buy good foods, but you cannot buy good appetite. You can buy good tonics, but you cannot buy good health. You can buy good books, but you cannot buy wisdom.

# Christianity

## INTRODUCTION

Christianity derives its name from Christ. Christianity speaks of a Personal God. There is not much deep philosophy or Yoga Sadhana in Christianity. There is reason for this. Jesus had to deal with the illiterate fishermen of Galilee. He gave them only moral precepts and showed them the way of righteous living.

Christianity is based chiefly on Judaism and partly on Buddhism. The doctrines of the Christian religion are all taken from Judaism. Jesus never professed to abolish Judaism and to set up a new religion of his own.

Christian faith sprung from the wisdom of India overspread the old trunk of Judaism. Buddhism prevailed in Palestine when Christ was born. Christ himself came in contact with it through John the Baptist. There is a striking resemblance between Buddhism and Christianity in their precepts, in their forms and ceremonies, in the architectural style of their temples, and even in the accounts of the lives of their founders.

The dogmas or metaphysical doctrines of Christianity are the same as those of Judaism but its moral precepts are much higher and nobler than those of the Jewish prophets. Christianity owes to Buddhism that higher morality which distinguishes it from Judaism. The moral precepts and teachings of Buddhism have much in common with those of Christianity. Christ himself taught no dogmas.

The teaching of Jesus which is chiefly ethical is embodied in the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord's Prayer and certain parables known as the parables of the Good Samaritan, the Prodigal Son, and the Sheep and the Goats.

## LORD JESUS

Lord Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the King. He was the son of a carpenter of Nazareth, a large village in Galilee, the northern Province of Palestine.

Jesus was a Palestine Jew of the first century. He lived with Joseph and Mary and a large family of brothers or half-brothers in the house of the carpenter of Nazareth. He was baptised by John the Baptist on the banks of the river Jordan. Now he saw a vision of God's spirit descending like a dove on him. He heard a voice say unto him: "Thou art my beloved son. I am well pleased with thee." John the Baptist was the Preceptor of Jesus.

Jesus was an incarnation of the Hebrew God Jehovah. Jesus is the Greek transliteration of an Aramaic name pronounced Yeshua, according to Hebrew Scholars. It was altered into Jesus in English. He was also called Messiah, the anointed one, or the Saviour of the World.

Between his 18th and 32nd years of age, Jesus spent his life in India and lived like a Hindu or Buddhist monk. He had burning Vairagya (dispassion) and spirit of renunciation. In India he assimilated Hindu ideals and principles.

## THE CROSS

Lord Jesus totally surrendered himself at the lotus feet of the Lord. He had intense faith in Him. It was the faith that sustained him throughout his life. The Cross of Jesus will remain for ever the supreme example of love and suffering without returning evil for evil. The Cross symbolises a great principle of life. In the Christian theology the Cross has a won-



derful halo. It is not a common cross of wood. The Cross of Jesus is a classic instance of love resisting evil and overcoming it. When Lord Jesus was put to the Cross, he said: "My Lord! They do not know what they are doing. Please forgive them." What a large heart and wonderful power of endurance Jesus had!

He who has control over the flesh, who has crucified the flesh, who has subdued the life-passions, who has self-control, who has mortified the lower nature, can bear the Cross.

### JESUS' QUALITIES

Jesus was holy. He was God-man, the incarnation of God. Jesus called himself the Son of God.

In Jesus we see perfect holiness, goodness, kindness, mercy, gentleness and justice. He said: "I am the Truth, the Way and the Life." He is the embodiment of all that is best, sublimest and most beautiful. He is the most perfect type and ideal of humanity. He is the embodiment of all his teachings. He is a philosopher, prophet, teacher, reformer. He always practised what he taught.

Jesus was truthful. His thoughts were very pure. There was no hypocrisy or deception in his thoughts. He risked his own life in uttering the truth. The spirit of Jesus is the spirit of Truth. He is called the Sun of Righteousness. He went about doing good.

The words of Jesus still elevate people. They still live as a fountain of inspiration.

Christ took the sins of humanity on himself, suffered for their sins and made them free. This is the theory of Atonement of Christ.

### HIS PHILOSOPHY AND TEACHINGS

Nearly two thousand years have pass-

ed since Lord Jesus, the Prophet of Palestine taught the way, the truth and the life to mankind. The words of Jesus were not collected till some generations after they were uttered. Christianity was essentially a radiant way of life, a way of happy and victorious living in this world.

There is no record of the life of Jesus until he was fully grown up. He astonished people by his insight when discussing religion with the religious leaders of his day. For three years he explained his claim as the "Only Son of God" and taught people about the nature of his "Father" God, and the true paths of human life in the shape of 'Sermon on the Mount', etc. Jesus Christ has been called "The Great Exemplar". He explained the real nature of God, man and the world he lived in. He taught people to change their way of looking at things. He told them that if they would change their outlook on life from its materialistic to its spiritualistic aspect, they would realise that the world they were living in was God's Kingdom.

He has left no written records of his important teachings. He delivered all his teachings orally. Neither he nor his followers ever wrote down even a single word which was spoken by him, in his life-time.

His words have been misunderstood, wrongly annotated, mutilated, deformed and transformed and yet they have survived almost two thousand years as they were very powerful and came from the heart of a realised Yogi.

Here is the gist of Jesus's teachings: God is a Spirit. He is Omnipresent. He loves His creatures with infinite love. He is the Father of all. God is immanent in the world. He is transcendental also. He sent His son Jesus Christ unto the world to show them the way to attain immortality.

The theological doctrine of Jesus is belief in the Fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man. In Godhead there are three Persons, viz., Father, Son and the Holy Ghost or Spirit. This is the Trinity of Christianity.

All men are brothers, because they are all members of the family of God. If the teaching of Christ is carried out there will be no war.

### THE NEW TESTAMENT

The New Testament contains 27 books. The first four books are Gospels which describe the life of Christ on this earth. The next book tells us of the Acts of the Apostles, particularly of the important Apostle Paul. The twenty-one shorter books give out the ideas underlying the Christian faith of the early Christians. The last book is the book of Revelations. It gives a description of the series of visions, viz., the lamb of God and the heavenly city. The author is John the favourite Apostle of Jesus. All these books were written in Greek, which was the language of educated men at the beginning of the Christian era.

### SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Here is his "Sermon on the Mount":

Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.

Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the sons of God.

Blessed are they that have been persecuted for righteousness sake; for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when men shall reproach you and persecute you and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad; for great is your reward in Heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

### JESUS AND THE MODERN MAN

True, Lord Jesus bled on the Cross for the redemption of his people. Today, from his eternal seat in the Kingdom of God, his divine compassionate heart bleeds ever more profusely. For, the people of his time were ignorant of the Law and they erred; but the people of the modern world have the resplendent light of Lord Jesus' life and teachings illumining the path of darkness, ignorance, sin, selfishness, sensuousness and misery. If his merciful heart bled for the ignorant sinners, how much more would it not bleed for the sins of those who err, ignoring His light!

Is this the way in which you would like humanity to show its gratitude to the Saviour? No, a thousand times no. It is never too late to mend. Study the Gospels again. Meditate on the resplendent, spiritually glowing, divine form of Lord Jesus. How sweet, how compassionate, how gentle and loving he was! And yet, he showed no leniency towards himself. He turned resolutely away from Satan—not that he could ever be tempted, but to set an example before us.

Trials and temptations come but to be overcome by the brave. Tests and trying situations come to strengthen your mind and to purify your heart. They are, as it were, the wise men that discover the Jesus



in you. To succumb to these trials is weakness. To fast, to pray, to discriminate and to overcome these obstacles with the help of the grace of the Lord is spiritual heroism. When the victory is achieved, to feel, to realise and to proclaim that it was the Lord's grace that enabled you to attain victory is real meekness. Meekness is virtue; weakness is sin. Learn this great lesson from the life of Lord Jesus.

Study the Sermon on the Mount again and again. Meditate upon it. Choose the Lord's instructions one after the other,

month after month, and endeavour diligently to put them into practice. Thus will you grow into a worthy child of Lord Jesus. Thus will you reincarnate Lord Jesus in your own heart. There are many today who truly and sincerely follow the teachings of the Saviour. In their hearts has Jesus reincarnated, to guide you, to lead you to the Kingdom of God, where he has his supreme seat. May you all be living embodiments of the Sermon on the Mount! May you realise the Kingdom of God with-in you here and now!

## Islam

### INTRODUCTION

Islam is the name given by Mohamed, the Prophet of Arabia, to the religion which he founded. Islam is an Arabic word, which means peace. It means submission to the will of God. It means surrender, acceptance of the revelation and commands of God. The personal name of God is Allah. The aim of Mohamed's preaching was the establishment of the religion of one God, Allah. Islam is a religion of universal brotherhood like Theosophy. Firm, unswerving belief in one God is the essence of true religion according to Islamic faith. It makes no distinction between caste and caste, creed and creed.

"There is no God but Allah and Mohamed is the Messenger of Allah." This is the fundamental teaching of the Prophet of Islam. This is the cardinal tenet or doctrine of Islam. The religion of Islam is expressed shortly in this short formula. Mohamed preached the unity of God. He taught the love of God, respect for parents and the aged, reverence to women and a noble standard of life. Alms-giving or cha-

rity was a religious duty. He said: "Every good act is charity. Your smiling in your brother's face is charity. Putting a wanderer in the right path is charity."

The religion of Mohamed is based chiefly on Judaism and partly on Zoroastrianism. The Prophet has improved upon the Jewish religion in certain respects. He was born in the sixth century.

The religion taught by the Prophet of Arabia is plain, simple and direct. The beauty of this religion is marred by the un-Islamic behaviour of some of the followers of Islam. It is clearly said in Koran, "No man is a true believer unless he desireth for his brother that which he desires for himself. God will not be affectionate to that man who is not affectionate to God's creatures. Assist any person oppressed whether he is Muslim or non-Muslim. Love your fellow-being first."

Islam recognises brotherhood of man. A Muslim is expected to treat a non-Muslim as a brother and with as much generosity and friendliness as possible. Islam is a religion of service. The service of man and

the good of humanity constitute the service and worship of God.

Prophet Mohamed taught to the people more of ethics than deep philosophy, as they had no proper culture.

A Muslim believes in God, His Angels, His books and His messengers, the Last day, the Resurrection from the dead, Predestination by God, good and evil, the Judgment, the Balance, Paradise and Hell fire, the divine inspiration of Mohamed, the origin of the Koran as divine inspiration, the future state. He is ready to enter into the religious war (Jihad) when so ordered by the divine as a religious duty.

The first principle of Islam is "God has sent messengers to mankind throughout the ages to teach them that all messengers and all holy books are true," thereby emphasising the universality of faith.

### TEACHINGS

The five cardinal tenets of Islam are (1) Oneness of God and the revelation of God's will to man through a series of Prophets, the last of the series being Mohamed, (2) Prayer (Salat), (3) Fasting, (4) Almsgiving or charity (Zakat) and (5) Haj (pilgrimage to Mecca). These are the five pillars of Islam.

The sacred book of the Muslims is the Koran. This book deals with many different subjects, doctrines, morals, legal enactments, matters of State, manners and matters of private import. They have been collected into Surahs or chapters. To the Muslim it is the word of God eternal and uncreated conveyed to the Prophet in Arabic by the angel Gabriel. The Holy Koran is divided into 114 chapters. The word 'Surah' literally means eminence or high degree. The total number of verses is 6,247. The Koran was revealed bit by bit during a period of 23 years. Of the twenty-

three years over which the revelation of the whole book is spread, thirteen years were passed by Mohamed at Mecca and ten years at Medina.

Islam is a religion of peace. It is submission to the will of God. A true Mussalman must be tolerant. Islam teaches that every religion is true. Islam teaches that God has sent Prophets and religious teachers to mankind to bring them to the path of goodness, to teach them the noble things of life, to be kind, to be noble, to be merciful, to be good and to be just. Islam teaches to regard not only human beings with kindness and tolerance, but also to treat animals with kindness.

Koran says: "Any man may attain liberation by his faith and good actions. The flesh and blood of the animals that are sacrificed shall never reach God, but your purity shall reach God. The flesh and blood of the animals you kill, shall not bring salvation for you. Kill this ego. Serve the suffering humanity. Sacrifice your money, time and energy in the service of the poor, the oppressed. This will give you salvation or freedom."

In Korān the brotherhood of man and the equality of woman with man socially, economically and spiritually are emphasised. Man is a member of a great fraternity. Woman is the counterpart of man.

Selflessness and service are the ideals which a Muslim is enjoined to follow. The essence of Islam is the service of the suffering humanity. The sacred Koran says: "Woe to those who pray, who are unmindful of their prayers, who make a show and refuse help to the needy."

The Prophet of Islam also was a great lover of the doctrine of *Ahimsa*. Injuring people in any way or destroying any living creature is reprehensible. He taught that men would be specially judged on the day



of judgment with regard to their cruel treatment of dumb creatures.

Prophet has enjoined on his followers full and broad toleration of the views and beliefs of people other than their own. Koran says: "Let there be no compulsion in religion."

There is no asceticism in Islam. The rigorous austere practices which cause torture to human body are strictly prohibited. What is wanted is a contrite heart, sincere repentance and serious continuous effort to avoid evil and practise virtue.

The great Muslim fast is that of Ramzan. It is a fast for one month. Eating and drinking are forbidden during the day, but are allowed at night.

Jihad is exerting oneself for the cause of religion. It is not taking part in war against unbelievers. Islam strictly prohibits application of force for its observance. There is no compulsion in religion.

Islam teaches that the followers of it should acquire the manifold attributes of Allah. No one can be a Muslim and none can attain Allah without acknowledging the essential truths of all religions.

There is no such thing in Islam that a Muslim should fight in order that religion should live. Islam forbids fighting. Islam says: "You shall not take up arms except in the cause of self-defence." In every sentence of the Koran those who are tyrants have been told: "If you tyrannise over people, if you are cruel to them, you shall be punished."

The Muslims believe in the immortality of the Soul. There will be a day of resurrection when the dead will rise to receive the rewards and punishment of their deeds in life in accordance with their merits and demerits.

## CONCLUSION

The Prophet of Islam taught of the great orders of Angels who carry out God's Will; four Archangels—Michael, the Angel who protects; Gabriel, the Angel who bears God's messages; Azrael, the Angel of death and Israfil, the Angel of the last trumpet.

At a time when Europe was covered in ignorance and darkness, the early Musalmans kept alive the burning torch of Science and learning. They were thinkers, philosophers and seekers of knowledge. From the eighth century till the fourteenth of our era, the children of Islam were the torch-bearers in the West. Universities were established in Cairo, Baghdad, in Cordova in Spain. Christian Europe learnt its earliest lessons in science, in astronomy, in chemistry, in mathematics from the Musalmans.

There have been in the history of Islam many women who have contributed enormously not only to literature, but also to science. Read the history of the Arabs in Spain and Baghdad. You will be amazed to read therein that women have sat as High Court Judges, have written books and poems, have been scientists and mathematicians, have run schools and hospitals and had under their care thousands of males of every age. They had no Purdah system. The Purdah system in India is of foreign growth. It had its origin in Greece. From Greece it went to Iran and from Iran it was brought by the early Musalman invaders into India.

Such was the splendid development of the Religion which the Prophet of Arabia founded. Its philosophical side too was very noble. It taught that all is from God, that there is no beauty in the world that is not His beauty, that there is no love in the heart of man that is not a breath of His love.

# Sufism

## INTRODUCTION

Sufism is liberal Islam, with a colouring of Vedanta. Sufism is Islamic in origin. Sufism is the religion of love with *Madhurya Bhava*, with the concepts of the lover and the Beloved.

Sufism is not considered as an integral part of orthodox Islam. Other scholars have traced an Indian origin of the movement. Indian mysticism and Christian mysticism have affected the later developments of Sufism. Indian Sufism is a blend of Persian Sufism and Hindu mysticism.

## SUFISTIC SAINTS

Lal Shahbaz, Mansoor, Shams Tabriez, Sachal, Rohal, Dalpat, Shah Inayet, Shah Latif, Bulleh Shah, Hafiz, Rumi and Jami were all Sufistic mystics.

The Sufistic saints are as liberal and catholic as the Vedantic Sannyasins. They are mystic saints. They are devotional. Their utterances or sayings have a wonderful directness, freshness, spontaneous loveliness and charm.

The Sufi mystic sees the Lord in all. He experiences cosmic vision. He beholds his Beloved everywhere and in all objects. He has no sense of possession. He is free from egoism, lust, greed, anger and pride. He is perfectly passionless and enjoys perfect peace and poise. His state is beyond description. He is like the Jivanmukta, or liberated sage. He calls the heart as the palace of the Beloved. He does not care for dogmas or doctrines, creeds or sects. He has attained *Para Bhakti* or supreme devotion.

## DOCTRINES

Asceticism is an essential feature of

Sufism. The Sufi consecrates all his acts,—physical, mental and spiritual,—to the will of God. Unity of God, brotherhood of man and self-surrender to the Lord are the most vital doctrines of Sufism.

In Sufism God has form. The Sufis recognise His formless aspect too.

Tasawwuf (Sufism) combines ecstasy and service of man. A Sufi wants to remain in the world and serve humanity, but to be above worldliness.

The Sufi language of ecstasy describes the divine experience in a variety of ways such as sweetness, intoxication, perfume, sleep and death. Wine is a symbol of divine intoxication.

In Sufism, Beauty leads to Love and Love to Bliss. All duality melts. The Lover and the Beloved become one. The Sufi strives to attain Absolute Beauty, Absolute Love and Absolute Bliss.

For a Sufi, music is a means to ecstasy. Music plays a very important part in Sufi religious exercise. Sufis worship beauty.

'Nasut' means the finite human qualities. 'Lahut' means the infinite qualities of God. Survival of individuality is 'baqa.' 'Fana' means complete annihilation of the lower self or the mystical realisation of union with God. It means dying alive or the sublimation of the ego by annihilating it.

## SADHANA

Concentration, meditation, obedience to a Guru (Pir), poverty, discipline, fasts, penances, Japa or recitation of the sacred word (Zikr), the use of rosary, rhythmic and controlled breathing, prayer, universal love, non-injury, detachment, introspection,



dispassion, purity of heart and self-control are the means to attain God or the Beloved through divine grace.

The Sufi aspirant looks in a mirror and concentrates on the *Trikute* or the space between the two eye-brows in his own reflection in the mirror.

It is very difficult to practise the *Bhava* of the lover and the Beloved. This sort of Sufistic Sadhana proves dangerous in the case of unregenerate, passionate practitioners and leads to corruption. They mistake the intoxication caused by the drink of wine for Divine Intoxication and indulge themselves in drinking and sensuality. The aspirant should remain under the strict guidance of a Guru during his Sadhana period.

### WORDS OF WISDOM

Prayer carries us half-way to Allah;

fasting takes us to the door of His palace; charity gains us admission.

He needs no other rosary whose thread of life is strung with beads of love, service, charity and renunciation.

Righteousness is not that you turn your faces towards the east or the west, but a righteous man is one who believes in God, the last day, the angels, the Book and the prophets, who does charity to the poor, who is steadfast in prayer.

Happy are the believers, who humble themselves in prayer and who keep aloof from vain words, who do charitable acts, and who restrain their appetites.

Your God is one God, there is no God but He, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

Do good, because God loveth those who do good.

## Zoroastrianism

### INTRODUCTION

Hinduism, Christianity, Buddhism are world religions but Zoroastrianism is just a national religion now though it was a world religion in days of yore. It is the religion of the Parsees. The correct name for the religion established by Zoroaster is Mazdayasnism which means the worship of Mazda or the Lord.

Mazdayasnism was first revealed by Homa to King Jamshid. Afterwards it was revealed to King Fiedoon. Then it was revealed to Thritha. Lastly it was revealed to Zoroaster.

After the death of Zoroaster his son-in-law Jamaspa became his successor. Jamaspa wrote down the teachings of Zoroaster which are known as Zend Avesta, the

scriptures of the Zoroastrians. Frashaoshtra, father-in-law of Zoroaster, was the first apostle of this faith. He expounded the tenets of this religion. Zoroastrianism became the state religion of Persia.

After the time of Zoroaster, Zoroastrianism underwent many changes at the hands of the priests who were called Magi. The priests re-introduced ritualism and the worship of the old nature-deities in a new garb by making them archangels of Ahura Mazda.

Persia is now a Mohammedan country. A few Zoroastrians are found there. They were persecuted and driven out of Persia. They took refuge in India. They are called the Parsees. They have become a self-contained community in India.

Zoroaster was not a philosopher or a metaphysician. He was only a Prophet who had the divine revelation.

Zoroastrianism is not a system of philosophy. It is a revealed religion of faith and devotion. During the days of Zoroaster there was an urgent need for ethics and virtuous life. The need for philosophy did not arise. At all times the need to lead a virtuous, divine life is far more imperative for the vast majority than the need to understand the various philosophical problems. If one leads the divine life according to the instructions of sages and scriptures, he will find a solution for all the philosophical problems from within through the voice of the Indweller.

Originally there was a common religion among the Aryans in Central Asia. There is similarity between the Vedic and Zend languages. Even the versification of the Zend Avesta is closely related to that of the Vedas. There is identity of divine names in the Zend Avesta and the Vedas.

The principal truths taught by Zoroaster were based on and derived from the Vedas. Zoroastrianism is based on the Vedic religion. The doctrines and ceremonies of the Zoroastrians have a mostly remarkable similarity to those of the Vedas.

### ZOROASTRIAN SCRIPTURES

The Yasna and the Visparad are the Vedas of Zoroastrianism. The first part of Yasna consists of Gathas or hymns which came from the mouth of the prophet. The Gathas are five in number. The Gathas are written in metres which correspond to the metres of the Sama Veda. The second part of Yasna contains prayers addressed to the Supreme Lord and other deities who form the spiritual hierarchy.

Visparad is a collection of invocations or litanies which are recited before other

prayers and scriptures. The twenty-one Nasks deal with all kinds of Sciences, viz., medicine, astronomy, agriculture, botany, etc. They correspond to the Vedangas of Hinduism. Then there is the Khordah Avesta or little Avesta which contains Yashts (invocations) and prayers for the use of lay persons. The modern Parsees recite these prayers daily.

Zoroastrian scriptures are called Zend Avesta. They contain three parts. The first is Vendidad. This contains religious laws and ancient mythical tales. The second is Visparad. The third is Yasna. The Avesta contains direct conversations between Zoroaster and Ahura Mazda, the Supreme Lord.

### FIRE, THE SYMBOL OF GOD

People believe that the religion of Zoroaster was fire-worship. This is a mistake. "Do not say that the Iranians were fire-worshippers. They were worshippers of one God." These are the utterances of the great Firdusi. Fire is a sacred and supreme symbol of God. It is a sacred symbol in the Avesta. Fire is considered as the son of Ahura Mazda. The prophet of Iran did not teach fire-worship. He taught the worship of the one Supreme Lord of the universe, Ahura Mazda. Fire is the symbol of divine in all sacrifices. It is a sacred object. It is the symbol of divine life. It is the sacred symbol most revered by the Zoroastrians of today.

In every religion, fire has been the symbol of the Supreme Lord. Brahman is fire in Hinduism. Ahura Mazda is fire. The Jews worship their God as a pillar of fire. The Christians declare that their God is a consuming fire. Fire symbolised the brilliance of the Lord. It is purifying. Fire stands for effulgence, illumination. The worship of Agni or Fire



comes in the Vedas also. In the Bible it is said, "God is light." Upanishads declare "Brahman is Jyotirmaya (full of light)." In every religion fire finds a place in rituals. Fire brings the message that God is Light of lights. Zoroaster himself held Fire in great sanctity as a noble gift from God. He summoned Fire from the sky and pointed it to heaven. The Heavens burst into fire. Some of the flames darted downwards and fired the altar at his side. Sacred fire in the altar of a temple is a symbol that reminds the Parsee of the glory of Ahura Mazda. It is called Atar in the Avesta.

Fire is declared to be the most helpful of all the spiritual intelligences or archangels. He is the most friendly. He comes down from Ahura Mazda. He is acquainted with all heavenly secrets.

The Jews received for the first time the ideas of heaven and hell, of angels and archangels of Messiah, of the resurrection and the last day of judgment from Zoroastrianism. These have laid the foundation to the doctrines of Christianity and Islam also.

### AHURA MAZDA

Ahura Mazda is the Supreme Universal Lord. He is All-pervading. He is the source and the fountain of life. He corresponds to the Hiranyagarbha of the Hindus. He is the Brilliant, Majestic, Greatest, Best, most Beautiful, the strongest, most intel-

lectual, the Highest through Holiness, the Holiest among the heavenly who created the world. He is changeless, mighty, just, merciful, most beneficial.

The prophet of Iran preached that all that is good and beneficial to mankind is the creation of Ahura Mazda and everything that is malignant is the creation of Ahriman or Satan.

The following are the commands which Ahura Mazda, the supreme Lord has sent to the followers of Zoroastrianism through His prophet Zoroaster. To know God as one, to know the Prophet Zoroaster as His true prophet, to have perfect faith in the religion and the Zend Avesta, to have unswerving faith in the goodness of God; not to disobey any of the commands of Zoroastrianism, to shun all evil actions, to do virtuous actions, to pray five times a day, to face some bright object like sun while worshipping God, to have perfect faith in the justice on the fourth morning after death, to exert for attaining heaven and to fear hell, to think always that God has done what He willed and shall do what He wills.

Zoroastrianism teaches that the goal of life is to attain perfect eternal happiness through companionship with Ahura Mazda. The means for attaining the everlasting bliss is Asha or holiness. Holiness or purity is the soul of Zoroastrianism.

### *Sivananda on 'Peace'—11*

Perfect peace cannot be promoted by anybody who does not have perfect peace in himself. No political 'ism' can ever solve the problem and bring about real peace. Each new 'ism' creates only more problems and more quarrels.

# Taoism

## INTRODUCTION

"Tao" is a Chinese word meaning 'way', 'way of Heaven', 'Path' or 'road' or 'method'. It indicates a line or principle of conduct. There is no proper English term for 'Tao'. It means the 'Eternal Being'.

The Founder of Taoism was Lao-Tze. Lao-Tze was born in 604 B.C. in the village of Chu-Jhren, in Li country, belonging to the Ku province of the State Chu. He was born under the plum tree (in Chinese 'Li'). He adopted it as his surname. The hair of the head was white when he was born. Hence he was called Lao-Tze (old boy) or philosopher, one who is child-like even when old.

He was popularly called Lao-Tze. His name was Er (ear). He was called Tan after his death. 'Tan' means 'long lobe'. He had peculiar long ears. His appellation was 'Po Yang' or "count of positive principle". He was a keeper or recorder of the secret Archives in the Royal court of Chore. He was a State Historian.

## TAO

Lao-Tze says: Tao is one. It was in the beginning. It will remain for ever. It is Impersonal, eternal, immutable, omnipresent, bodiless, immaterial. It cannot be perceived by the senses. It is nameless. It is indescribable.

It is the first cause from which all substances take their origin and all phenomena flow. The great Tao is all-pervading. All things depend on it for life. It is the mother of all phenomena, of heaven and earth. It existed before the Personal God. It is the father of God. It is the producer of God. It is the originator of heaven and earth. It is the mother of all things.

You will find that there is an aroma of Indian Vedantic philosophy in the teachings of Lao-Tze.

Tao is everywhere. It is in the ant. It is in the grass. It is in the earthen-ware vessel. It is in excrement. It is in the highest place but is not high. It is in the lowest place, but is not low. It is in ancient times, but itself is not ancient. It is in old age but itself is not old. It is everywhere, but appears to be nowhere.

Tao is the sanctuary where all things find refuge. It is the good man's priceless treasure. It is the guardian and saviour of him who is not good. Tao overspreads and sustains all things.

The Tao which can be expressed in word is not the Eternal Tao. The name which can be uttered is not its Eternal Name.

Whatever is contrary to the Tao soon ends. When the great Tao prevails, the outer doors need not be closed. All will be virtuous. There will be no theft.

If Tao perishes, then virtue will perish. If virtue perishes, then charity will perish. If charity perishes, then righteousness will perish. If righteousness perishes, then ceremonies will perish.

The man who achieves harmony with Tao enters into close union with external objects. No object has the power to harm or hinder him.

Tao does nothing. It has no bodily form. It cannot be seen. It has its root in Itself. From Tao came the mysterious existence of God. It produced heaven and earth. It was before the primordial ether. Tao produces all things and nourishes them.



It presides over all. Tao is the fundamental principle of the philosophy and religion of Lao-Tze.

The way of the Tao is to act without thinking of acting, to taste without discerning any flavour, to consider what is small as great, and a few as many, and to react injury by kindness.

### THE MEANS FOR ATTAINING THE TAO

Purity, humility, contentment, compassion, kindness towards all living creatures, higher knowledge and self-control are the means for attaining the Tao. Concentration and Pranayama (breathing exercises) are helpful in the path of Tao.

### SAYINGS OF LAO-TZE

Tao Te Ching (canon of Tao and its manifestation) contains the sayings and teachings of Lao-Tze. Lao-Tze himself wrote this book in the sixth century B.C. This title was given by Emperor Ching. He issued an imperial decree that Lao-Tze's work on Tao should be respected as a canonical book.

He who acts, destroys. He who grasps, loses. Therefore, the sage does not act and so does not destroy. He does not grasp and so he does not lose.

Without going out of doors, one may know the entire universe; without looking out of the window, one may see the way of heaven. The further one travels, the less one may know. Thus it is that without moving you shall know; without looking you shall see; without doing you shall attain.

Sincere words are not fine; fine words are not sincere.

If you would contract, you must first expand. If you would weaken, you must first strengthen. If you would overthrow,

you must first raise up. If you would take, you must first give. This is called the dawn of intelligence.

To the good I would be good. To the not good, I would also be good in order to make them good.

He who humbles himself shall be preserved entire. He who bends shall be made straight. He who is empty shall be filled. He who is worn out shall be renewed. He who has little shall succeed. He who has much shall go astray.

Some things are increased by being demolished and others are diminished by being increased.

Those who know, do not speak; those who speak, do not know.

To know when one does not know is best. To think one knows when one does not know is a dire disease. Only he who recognises this disease as a disease can cure himself of the disease.

I have three precious things which I hold fast and prize. The first is gentleness; the second is frugality; the third is humility, which keeps me from putting myself before others. Be gentle, and you can be bold; be frugal and you can be liberal. Avoid putting yourself before others and you can become a leader among men.

There is no greater sin than yielding to desire; no greater misery than discontentment; no greater calamity than the propensity to acquire.

Abandon your scheming. Put away your gains. Thieves and robbers will not exist.

Hold fast to that which will endure.

Show thyself simple, preserve thee pure, thine own keep small, thy desires poor.

Renounce learnedness and you will have no vexation.

He who overcomes others is strong, but he who overcomes himself is mighty.

### CONCLUSION

Taoism has its monks and nuns. They wear yellow caps. They retire from the world and live in caves, forests and secluded retreats in mountains.

Taoism inculcates the highest ethics, pure living and discipline of mind and body.

Emancipation is attained through the realisation of Tao through self conquest.

There is the idea of purgatory in Taoism, of the reward and punishment after death. There is also rebirth. Lao-Tze believed in the immortality of the Soul. He advocated the doctrine of reincarnation of the soul after death.

Sincerity is the first step towards the knowledge of Tao. That knowledge is maintained by silence. Tao is employed with gentleness.

When the aspirant is serene and tranquil, his wisdom becomes complete. When his wisdom becomes complete, the light of intelligence grows around him. When the light of intelligence grows around him, he is one with the Tao. This is true forgetfulness, a forgetting which does not forget, a forgetting of what cannot be forgotten. That which cannot be forgotten is the True Tao.

Glory to Lao-Tze, the founder of Taoism, that old boy who was born under the plum tree with peculiar long lobes, with white hair, the reputed sage of China! Glory, glory to Tao, the Eternal Great One, the Brahman of the Upanishads!!

## Confucianism

### INTRODUCTION

Confucius was born in 551 B.C. in the feudal State of Lu, a portion of what is now the province of Shangtung on the north-eastern seaboard of China. The name of Confucius in Chinese is Kung-fu-tse, i.e., the statesman-philosopher Kung. The first European scholars who visited China found that name hard to pronounce. So they turned it into Latin and called him Confucius.

There are three religions in China, viz., Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism. Confucius and Lao-Tze, founder of Taoism, were contemporaries. They are sages and philosophers. They are not regarded as Saviours. Lao-Tze was fifty-three years older than Confucius. They met each

other. Socrates and Buddha also were the contemporaries of Confucius.

Confucianism is not a religion in the customary sense. It has neither priesthood nor any monastic order. It existed in China long before the time of Confucius. In one of his recorded sayings he speaks of himself as a 'transmitter' and not a 'maker' or 'originator'. He did not give a new religion to the world or a new ethical code. What he gave to the world was only a powerful restatement of the fundamental principles of human morality or ethics. He issued a new and improved edition of the old one. The moral code he framed was most admirable. It contained grand ethical truths.



Some say that Confucianism is no religion in reality, because Confucius is a philosopher, moralist, statesman and educationist, but no religionist. They say that the thoughts and teachings of Confucius are ethical philosophy, political and educational principle, but not religious philosophy.

Confucius had a deep study of his country's literature and history. He had a strong conviction that just and righteous rulers only can protect the State and make the people virtuous. His ideal was to create a race of wise rulers like King Janaka. It was with this view he wandered from State to State in search of a good ruler.

Confucius devoted himself to the improvement of Society. He ever thought of the well-being of the Society. He tried his level best to contribute much to the social welfare. 'The Analects' or collection of sayings treats mainly of social welfare, human peace and harmony in Society. He strained his every nerve in giving moral training to people. He laid very great emphasis on cultivation of ethical virtues. He tried to remove the discordant or disturbing elements in Society. He had a strong conviction that if the superiors and elders had a blameless character, others would follow them and there would be love and universal peace everywhere. As these social thoughts ever occupied his mind, he had no time to discuss on God and life after death. Moreover, he did not find it necessary also to dwell on these subjects.

### BOOKS

The following four books are intimately concerned with the principles of Confucianism, viz., Ta-Hsueh, the Great Learning or learning for adults; Chung Yung, The Doctrine of the Mean; Lun Yu, the Confucian Analects in twenty books; and

Meng Tzu, the Philosophy of Mencius.

Ta-Hsueh is a politico-ethical treatise. Chung Yung was written by Kung Chi, a grandson of Confucius. It is a purely philosophical book. It treats of some general principles that concern the nature of mean and right conduct. Lun Yu, the Confucian Analects, contains sayings and conversations between the Teacher and his disciples. Meng Tzu, the philosophy of Mencius, is written by an ardent Confucianist. It deals with various questions raised by his disciples. It gives advice to rulers of feudal states. It treats of psychology, political theory and economics.

### SAYINGS

What the superior man seeks is in himself; what the small man seeks is in others. The superior man is dignified, but does not wrangle; social, but not a partisan. He does not promote a man simply because of his words, nor does he put good words aside because of the man.

Have sufficient self-control even to judge of others in comparison with yourself, and to act towards them as you would wish them to act to you. This is what one may call the 'doctrine of humanity', and there is nothing beyond this.

The way to become a superior man is to set one's affections on what is right, to love learning, which is the source of knowledge and virtue, with which nothing else can be compared. When righteousness is pursued with sincerity and a mind free from self-deception, the heart becomes rectified.

Up to this stage the individual has been busy only with his own improvement; but the cultivation of the person influences primarily those around him, and ultimately the whole empire. Everyone, therefore,

should carefully cultivate his person, having a due regard for others besides himself. Each man must guard his words and watch his conduct. He must fly all that is base and disquieting, and must take benevolence as his dwelling-place, righteousness as his road, propriety as his garment, wisdom as his lamp, and faithfulness as his charm. Dignity, reverence, loyalty and faithfulness make up the qualities of a cultivated man. His dignity separates him from the crowd; being reverent, he is beloved; being loyal, he is submitted to; and, being faithful, he is trusted.

### TEACHINGS

Confucius gave a great impetus to education and learning, and the study of rules of right conduct with a view to their practical application. According to his teaching, man's chief end is to know and make the most of himself as a member of Society. He preached to his disciples and the people the principles of good life and social harmony.

His teaching was largely concerned with the problems of good government. He said, "The Ruler himself should be virtuous, just, honest and dutiful. A virtuous ruler is like the Pole-star which, by keeping its place, makes all other stars to revolve round it. As is the Ruler, so will be the subjects."

What was Confucius' idea of virtue? His word for it was 'Jen'. The proper understanding of his ethical doctrine chiefly depends on the implications of Jen. There is no single English equivalent of Jen in all its shades of meaning. The essence of all his teachings may be summed up under this one word 'Jen'. The nearest equivalent to this difficult word is "social virtue". All those virtues which help to maintain social harmony and peace like benevolence, cha-

rity, magnanimity, sincerity, respectfulness, altruism, diligence, loving kindness, goodness are included in Jen.

Confucius said: "A virtuous man has three awes:—(1) Awe for Heaven's decree, (2) Awe for great men and (3) Awe for saints' words. When worshipping God, one must feel as if He were visibly present."

The teaching of Confucius is that the entire world and every being are constantly changing and that the most essential aspect for human life is the present Reality.

Confucius held that Society was made up of five relationships, viz., those of husband and wife, of parent and child, of elder and younger brother, or generally of elders and youngsters, of Ruler and Minister or subject, and of friend and friend. A country would be well-governed when all the parties performed their parts aright in these relationships. Confucius said: "There was Tao (a way or road of righteousness) only when fathers were fathers, when sons were sons, when Rulers were Rulers and when ministers were ministers."

Confucius laid great stress on the cultivation of character, purity of heart and conduct. He exhorted the people to develop a good character first, which is a priceless jewel and which is the best of all virtues.

### CONCLUSION

Confucius has had a great part in moulding the history of China and his influence is to this day a dominant factor in the public and private life of that country.

Confucius has rendered immortal the Sixth Century B.C. He was a born ruler of men. He would have shone as one of the world's greatest monarchs, if circumstances had been favourable. He had a highly developed moral sense and a pro-



found realisation of the supreme importance of morals in human life. His greatness has been universally recognised for many centuries. He is held in the highest

reverence by hundreds of millions of the world's inhabitants.

Glory to Confucius, the great moralist, statesman and social reformer of China.

## Shintoism

### INTRODUCTION

Shinto or Kaminomichi or the way of the Kami or the Gods is the name of the religion observed by the Japanese from time immemorial. 'Kami' means God or deity, or sometimes soul. Shinto implies spontaneous following of the 'Way of the Gods'. Shinto is not really an 'ism'. It is only a teaching. It is not a set of verbal theories or concepts. It is the all-pervading way.

It is very difficult to translate 'Shinto' into English. 'Shinto' means 'The way of the Gods' or the 'God-like way' or 'The way from the Gods'. There is no proper equivalent for the term 'Shinto' in English. Shinto is an all-pervading, indefinable way which is quite universal.

Shinto is divided into two classes, viz., the Sectarian Shinto, which is sub-divided into 13 sects; and the Shinto of the national faith of the Japanese, or the State Shinto Religion.

A perfect understanding of Shinto will enable one to have proper understanding of the Japanese nation and their culture. There is neither much grand philosophy nor complicated ritual in Shintoism. Shinto is not a religion adopted by the State. It is a religion of the heart. Shinto is a natural and real spiritual force which pervades the life of the Japanese. Shinto is a creative or formative principle of life. The Shinto

principle is the background of Japanese culture, code of ethics, fine arts, family and national structure.

Shinto is the chief agent which has rejuvenated, vitalised and reinforced the social and religious life of Japan.

The system of Shinto resembles more the system of Hinduism than that of Confucianism or Buddhism. It is a kind of personal religion. It ascribes divine attributes to every being. It is a kind of pantheism.

For the Japanese, nation means a harmonious complex of individuals, Kuni-hito. Salvation, for the Japanese, means the salvation of the whole nation instead of salvation of a few individuals.

### SHINTO THEOLOGY

According to Shinto theology, *Ame-no-mi-naka-nushi* is the Absolute Universal Self. This corresponds to *Hiranyagarbha* or the thread-Soul (*Sutratman*) of the Hindus. The visible universe (*Ken Kai*) and the invisible world (*Yu Kai*) have come into being from *Ame-no-mi-naka-nushi* through the activities of the three deities of Musubi, Principle of Creation, Completion and the Controlling Bond between the spiritual and the material, the invisible and the visible, the real and the ideal. These contradictory attributes are functional only. The Absolute Universal Self is not affected

by these contradictory attributes. It is beyond these attributes. It corresponds to the Nirguna Brahman (Attributeless Absolute) of Hinduism. The idea of time has come into existence from the attributes.

Absolute loyalty to the Sovereign Emperor, who is regarded as a direct descendant and representative of the highest God, respect for ancestors, profound feeling of piety towards the parents and love for children form the fundamental structure of the Great Universal Way.

The mirror, the sword and the jewel have a figurative meaning in the course of the development of Shinto. They symbolise wisdom, courage and benevolence or intelligence, will and love in Shinto theology. These three are the holy ensigns of royalty of the Sovereign Emperor. They are supposed to symbolise the dynamic working of the Great Way and so they are found in the forefront of every Shinto shrine, popularly known as Mistu-tomo-e or the three big commas.

There are many Gods in Shinto, but the ancestral Sun-God, Anaterasu-omi Kami, stands supreme above them.

Susano-o-no-Mikoto is the impetuous divine brother of the Sun-God. He is the God of rain-storm. Tsukiyomi-no-Mikoto is the Moon-God. These three constitute a divine triad. They preside, respectively, over the plane of High Heaven, the vast ocean, and the realm of Night.

### SHINTO ETHICS

Purity is one of the fundamental virtues of Shinto ethics. There are two significations of purity. One is outer purity or bodily purity and the other inner purity or purity of heart. If a man is endowed with true inner purity of heart, he will surely attain God-realisation or communion with

the Divine. Sincerity is also the guiding ethical principle of Shinto.

### TEN PRECEPTS OF SHINTO

- i) Do not transgress the will of the gods.
- ii) Do not forget your obligations to ancestors.
- iii) Do not offend by violating the decrees of the State.
- iv) Do not forget the profound goodness of the gods, through which calamity and misfortunes are averted and sickness is healed.
- v) Do not forget that the world is one great family.
- vi) Do not forget the limitations of your own person.
- vii) Do not become angry even though others become angry.
- viii) Do not be sluggish in your work.
- ix) Do not bring blame to the teaching.
- x) Do not be carried away by foreign teachings.

### SHINTO SAYINGS

The heart of the person before you is a mirror. See there your own form.

Even the wishes of an ant reach to heaven.

Leave the things of this world and come to me daily with pure bodies and pure hearts.

A single sincere prayer moves heaven. You will surely realise the divine presence through sincere prayer.

Where you have sincerity, there also is virtue. Sincerity is a witness to truth. Sincerity is the mother of knowledge. Sincerity is a single virtue that binds Divinity and man in one.



Retribution for good or ill is as sure as the shadow after substance.

To do good is to be pure. To commit evil is to be impure.

To admit a fault is the beginning of righteousness.

The first and surest means to enter into communion with the Divine is sincerity. If you pray to a deity with sincerity, you will surely feel the divine presence.

### COMMON SHINTO PRAYER

Our eyes may see some uncleanness, but let not our mind see things that are not clean. Our ears may hear some uncleanness, but let not our mind hear things that are not clean.

### CONCLUSION

Shinto is the 'Way to God'. 'Tao' of

Lao-Tze is also the 'Way to God'. Lord Jesus says: "I am the Truth, Way and the Life." Lord Krishna says: "Howsoever men approach Me, even so, do I welcome them, for the path men take from every side is Mine, O Partha!"

The Way to God is as much important as the end or destination or God itself. The Way to God is righteousness or *Dharma*. He who shows the Way is the Guru or the spiritual preceptor. Guru and God are one. If you stick to the Way, you soon reach God. If you stick to your Guru, you will surely attain God-realisation. Way, Truth, Life-everlasting are one.

Glory to the Way, Shinto or Tao! Glory to Guru! Glory, glory to God, the Destination or Goal of all religions. May Shinto or Tao guide you, rejuvenate, vitalise and reinforce you all! Be true to Shinto or Tao.







**SECTION IV**  
**Sivananda**  
**On**  
**Different Yogas**





# Yoga

## YOGA DEFINED

The word 'Yoga' comes from a Sanskrit root 'Yuj' which means 'to join'. In its spiritual sense, it is the process by which the identity of the individual soul and the Supreme Soul is realised by the Yogi. The human soul is brought into conscious communion with the Divine Reality. Just as camphor melts and becomes one with fire; just as a drop of water when it is thrown into the ocean, becomes one with the ocean; the individual soul, when it is purified, when it is freed from lust, greed, hatred and egoism, when it becomes pure (Sattvic), becomes one with the Supreme Soul. The science that teaches the way of acquiring this occult knowledge is called 'Yoga Sastra'.

Yoga, in a generic sense, refers to Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Raja Yoga, Jnana Yoga, Hatha Yoga, Mantra Yoga, Laya Yoga or Kundalini Yoga. In a restricted sense, it means the Ashtanga Yoga or Raja Yoga of Patanjali Maharshi only.

The word Yoga is also applicable in a secondary sense to all those factors and practices that are conducive to the final achievement or fulfilment of Yoga, and as such indirectly lead to final freedom or perfection. Similarly, though the one who has reached the final Asamprajnata Samadhi or union with Reality is called a *Yogi*, one who is attempting to get perfection in Yoga is also called a *Yogi*.

Yoga philosophy is one of the six systems of Hindu philosophy. Unlike so many other philosophies of the world, it is a philosophy that is wholly practical. Yoga is an exact science based on certain immutable Laws of Nature. It is well known to people

of all countries of the world interested in the study of Eastern civilization and culture, and is held in awe and reverence as it contains in it the master-key to unlock the realms of Peace, Bliss, Mystery and Miracle. Even the philosophers of the West found solace and peace in this Divine Science. Jesus Christ himself was a Yogi of a superior order, a Raja-Yogi indeed. The founder of the Yoga Philosophy, Patanjali Maharshi, was not only a Philosopher and a Yogi, but a Physician as well. He is said to have lived about three hundred years before Jesus Christ.

Yoga is that state of Absolute Peace wherein there is neither imagination nor thought. Yoga is control of mind and its modifications. Yoga teaches us how to control the modifications of the mind and attain liberation. It teaches us how to transmute the unregenerate nature and attain the state of Divinity. It is the complete suppression of the tendency of the mind to transform itself into objects, thoughts, etc. Yoga kills all sorts of pain, misery and tribulation. It gives you freedom from the round of births and deaths, with its concomitant evils of disease, old age, etc., and bestows upon you all the Divine Powers and final liberation through super-intuitional knowledge.

Equanimity is Yoga. Serenity is Yoga. Skill in actions is Yoga. Control of the senses and the mind is Yoga. Anything by which the best and the highest in life can be attained is also Yoga. Yoga is thus all-embracing, all-inclusive and universal in its application leading to all-round development of body, mind and soul.

Yoga is primarily a way of life, not

something which is divorced from life. Yoga is not forsaking of action, but is efficient performance in the right spirit. Yoga is not running away from home and human habitation, but a process of moulding one's attitude to home and society with a new understanding. Yoga is not a turning away from life; it is spiritualisation of life.

### YOGA IS UNIVERSAL

Yoga is for all. Yoga is universal. It is not a sectarian affair. It is a way to God and not a creed.

The practice of Yoga is not opposed to any religion or any sacred Church. It is purely spiritual and universal. It does not contradict anyone's sincere faith.

Yoga is not a religion, but an aid to the practice of the basic spiritual truths in all religions. Yoga can be practised by a Christian or a Buddhist, a Parsee, a Mohammedan, a Sufi or an atheist.

To be a Yogi means to abide continuously in God and to live at peace with men. Yoga is union with God. Yoga is union with all. God dwells in all.

### THIS IS NOT YOGA

A man gets himself buried in a box underneath the ground. He does this by plugging the nostrils through Khechari Mudra. This is no doubt a difficult Kriya. He gets *Jada Samadhi*. This is a state like deep sleep. The Samskaras and Vasanas (subtle desires) are not fried by this Samadhi. He does not return with super-intuitional knowledge. This cannot give Mukti or Liberation. This is a kind of feat only. This is not a sign of spirituality. People use this Kriya for acquiring money, name and fame. When they come out of the box, they stretch their hands for mo-

ney. They make transactions before they enter the box.

Tie the hands and legs of a man with iron-chains and shut him in a room. Before you lock the door he will stand before you. Get inside the room. He will be again there. No doubt this is very, very astonishing. It is a mere trick. It is a kind of *Jaalam*. Some people can sit on a plank studded with sharpened nails and chew snakes like chocolates. If you pierce a long needle in their arms, no blood will come out. Some can draw water from stone. A Yogic charlatan can perform all these things through some trick or *Jaalam*. But these have nothing to do with real Yoga.

The public will take a man to be a Yogi or Guru only if he exhibits some Siddhis. It is a serious mistake. They must not be overcredulous. They will be easily duped by these Yogic charlatans. They must use their power of discrimination and reasoning. They must study the ways, habits, nature, conduct, Vritti, Svabhava, antecedence, etc., of the Gurus and test their knowledge of scriptures, before they come to any definite conclusion.

### PREREQUISITES FOR YOGA PRACTICE

Moral purity and spiritual aspiration are the first steps in the path of Yoga. One who has a calm mind, who has faith in the words of his Guru and Sastras, who is moderate in eating and sleeping, and who has intense longing for deliverance from the Samsara-chakra is a qualified person for the practice of Yoga.

An aspirant in the path of Yoga should have faith, energy, cheerfulness, courage, patience, perseverance, sincerity, purity, lack of despondency of mind, dispassion, aspiration, concentration, serenity, self-



restraint, truthfulness, non-violence, non-covetousness, etc.

An austere and simple life is indispensable for Yoga. The foundation of Yoga is self-control. Discipline is the essence of Yoga, discipline of the body as well as discipline of the mind.

In the practice of Yoga, there is a reversal of the normal outgoing activity of the mind. Steadiness of mind is very essential for a reversal of the normal outgoing activity of the mind. Unless the mind is first made steady and brought under complete control, it will not be possible to change its course to the opposite direction.

### BENEFITS OF YOGA PRACTICE

Life today is full of stress and strain, of tension and nervous irritability, of passion and hurry. If man puts into practice a few of the elementary principles of Yoga, he would be far better equipped to cope with his complex existence.

Yoga brings in perfection, peace and lasting happiness. You can have calmness of mind at all times by the practice of Yoga. You can have restful sleep. You can have increased energy, vigour, vitality, longevity and a high standard of health. You can turn out efficient work within a short space of time. You can have success in every walk of life. Yoga will infuse in you new strength, confidence and self-reliance. The body and mind will be at your beck and call.

Yoga brings your emotions under control. It increases your power of concentration at work. Yoga discipline gives poise and tranquility and miraculously rebuilds one's life. The Yoga way of life deepens man's understanding and enables him to know God and his relationship with

Him.

Yoga leads from ignorance to wisdom, from weakness to strength, from disharmony to harmony, from hatred to love, from want to fullness, from limitation to infinitude, from diversity to unity, and from imperfection to perfection. Yoga gives hope to the sad and forlorn, strength to the weak, health to the sick and wisdom to the ignorant.

Through Yogic discipline, mind, body and the organ of speech work together harmoniously. For a Yoga practitioner, a new outlook, a new health, a new awareness and a new philosophy rush in and vividly transform his life.

Lust for power, material greed, sensual excitement, selfishness, passion for wealth and lower appetites have drawn man from his true life in the spirit into the materialistic life. He can regain his lost divine glory if he practises, in right earnest, the principles of Yoga. Yoga transmutes animal nature into divine nature and raises him to the pinnacle of divine glory and splendour.

### BEWARE OF SIDDHIS

If a Yogi is not careful, if a Yogi is not well-established in the preliminary practices of Yama and Niyama, he is unconsciously swept away from his ideal by temptation—Mara or Satan. He uses his powers for selfish ends and suffers a hopeless downfall. His intellect becomes blind, perverted and intoxicated. His understanding gets clouded. He is no longer a divine Yogi. He becomes a black-magician or Yogic charlatan. He is a black sheep within the fold of Yogis. He is a menace to the society at large.

Many people are attracted to the practice of Pranayama and other Yogic exer-

cises, as it is through Yoga that psychic healing, telepathy, thought-transference and other great Siddhis are obtained. But Yoga is not for attaining Siddhis or powers. If a Yogic student is tempted to attain Siddhis, his further progress is seriously retarded. He has lost the way.

Do not stop Sadhana when you get a few glimpses and experiences. Continue the practice till you attain perfection. Do

not stop the practice and move about in the world. Examples are not lacking. Numerous persons have been ruined. A glimpse cannot give you safety.

The Yogi who is bent upon getting the highest Samadhi must reject Siddhis whenever they come. Siddhis are invitations from Devatas. Only by rejecting these Siddhis can one attain success in Yoga.

## Karma Yoga

### WHAT IS KARMA

*Karma* is a Sanskrit term. It means action or deed. Any physical or mental action is Karma. Thinking is mental Karma. Karma is the sum total of our acts, both in the present life and in the preceding births.

Karma means not only action, but also the result of an action. There is a hidden power in Karma or action termed 'Adrishta' which brings in fruits of Karmas for the individual. The consequence of an action is really not a separate thing. It is a part of the action and cannot be divided from it.

Karma, according to Jaimini Rishi, is the performance of *Agnihotra* and other Vedic rituals. According to the Gita, any action done with *Nishkamya Bhava* is Karma. Lord Krishna says: "Work incessantly. Your duty is to work but not to expect the fruits thereof." The central teaching of the Gita is non-attachment to work. Breathing, eating, seeing, hearing, thinking, etc., are all Karmas. Thinking is real Karma. *Raga-dwesha* (likes and dislikes) constitute real Karma.

### HOW KARMA IS FASHIONED

Man is threefold in his nature. He consists of *Ichha*, *Jnana* and *Kriya*. *Ichha* is desire or feeling. *Jnana* is knowing. *Kriya* is willing. These three fashion his Karma. He knows objects like chair, tree. He feels joy and sorrow. He wills—to do this, or not to do that.

Behind the action, there are desire and thought. A desire for an object arises in the mind. Then you think how to get it. Then you exert to possess it. Desire, thought and action always go together. They are the three threads, as it were, that are twisted into the cord of Karma.

Desire produces Karma. You work and exert to acquire the objects of your desire. Karma produces its fruits as pain or pleasure. You will have to take births after births to reap the fruits of your Karmas. This is the Law of Karma.

### KINDS OF KARMA

Karma is of three kinds, viz., *Sanchita* or the accumulated works, *Prarabdha* or the fructifying works, and *Kriyamana* or



the current works. Sanchita is all the accumulated Karmas of the past. Part of it is seen in the character of man, in his tendencies and aptitudes, capacities, inclinations and desires. Prarabdha is that portion of the part of Karma which is responsible for the present body. It is ripe for reaping. It cannot be avoided or changed. It is only exhausted by being experienced. You pay your past debts. Kriyamana is that Karma which is now being made for the future. It is also called *Agami* or *Vartamana*.

In Vedantic literature, there is a beautiful analogy. The bow-man has already sent an arrow; it has left his hands. He cannot recall it. He is about to shoot another arrow. The bundle of arrows in the quiver on his back is the Sanchita. The arrow he has shot is Prarabdha. And the arrow which he is about to shoot from his bow is Agami. Of these, he has perfect control over the Sanchita and the Agami, but he must surely work out his Prarabdha. The past which has begun to take effect he has to experience.

Actions are of three kinds, viz., good, bad and mixed. Good Karmas make you a god or angel in heaven. Bad Karmas throw you in lower wombs. Mixed actions give you a human birth.

Every work is a mixture of good and evil. There can be neither absolute good work nor absolute bad work in this world. This physical universe is a relative plane. If you do some action, it will do some good in one corner, and some evil in another corner. You must try to do such actions that can bring the maximum of good and the minimum of evil.

### THE LAW OF KARMA

The Doctrine of Karma forms an in-

tegral part of Vedanta. The Law of Karma is one of the fundamental doctrines not only in Hinduism, but also in Buddhism and in Jainism.

As a man sows, so he shall reap. This is the Law of Karma. It expounds the riddle of life and the riddle of the universe. It brings solace, satisfaction and comfort to one and all. It is a self-evident truth. Fortunately, the Westerners have also begun now to acknowledge its importance and veracity. The Americans have now full belief in this doctrine. Every sensible man will have to accept it. There is no other go.

A close study of this law gives encouragement to the hopeless man, to the desperate and the ailing. Destiny is created by man's thoughts, habits and character. There is every chance for his correction and improvement by changing his thoughts and habits. The scoundrel can become a saint; the prostitute can become a chaste lady; a beggar can become a king. This mighty law provides for all this.

The Doctrine of Karma only can explain the mysterious problem of good and evil in this world. The Doctrine of Karma only can bring solace, contentment, peace and strength to the afflicted and the desperate. It solves our difficulties and problems of life. It gives encouragement to the hopeless and the forlorn. It pushes a man to right thinking, right speech and right action. It brings a brilliant future for that man who lives according to this universal law. If all people understand this law correctly and discharge their daily duties carefully, they would rise to sublime heights in the ladder of spirituality. They will be moral and virtuous and have a happy, peaceful, contented life. They can bear the burden of Samsara with patience, en-

duration and strength of mind. There will not be any room for complaint when they see the inequalities in birth, fortune, intelligence, capacities, etc. There will be heaven on earth. All will rejoice even in suffering. Greed, jealousy, hatred, anger, passion will vanish. Virtue will reign everywhere. We will have a glorious Satya Yuga now with peace and plenty everywhere. Blessed is the man who understands and lives in the Law, for he will soon attain God-consciousness and become one with the Law-giver! Then the Law will no longer operate on him.

### WHAT IS KARMA YOGA

Karma Yoga is consecration of all actions and their fruits unto the Lord. Karma Yoga is performance of actions dwelling in union with the Divine, removing attachment and remaining balanced ever in success and failure.

Karma Yoga is selfless service unto humanity. Karma Yoga is the Yoga of action which purifies the heart and prepares the *Antahkarana* (the heart and the mind) for the reception of Divine Light or attainment of Knowledge of the Self. The important point is that you will have to serve humanity without any attachment or egoism.

Action of some kind or the other is unavoidable. You cannot keep quiet without doing anything. What binds you to phenomenal existence or *Samsara* is not the action but the idea of doership and enjoyership. Karma binds when it is done with a selfish motive, with the expectation of fruits. But when action is done without the expectation of fruits, it is liberating. If you act as an instrument in the hands of the Lord, as a participant in the cosmic activity of Nature, without expectation of fruits, that Karma will not bind you. Kar-

ma, then, becomes Karma Yoga. Work unselfishly. Feel that you are only an instrument and that the Lord is working through you. Surrender the actions and their fruits to the Lord. You will be freed from the bonds of Karma and enjoy peace.

The practice of Karma Yoga prepares the aspirant for the reception of knowledge of the Self. It makes him a proper *Adhikari* (aspirant) for the study of Vedanta. Ignorant people jump at once to Jnana Yoga, without first having a preliminary training in Karma Yoga. That is the reason why they fail miserably to realise the Truth. Various impurities lurk in the fourfold mind (*Antahkarana*). The mind is filled with likes and dislikes, jealousy, etc. They only talk of Brahman. They indulge in all sorts of useless controversies, vain debates and dry, endless discussions. Their philosophy is only on their lips. In other words, they are lip-Vedantins. What is really wanted is practical Vedanta through ceaseless, selfless service. Selfless service is the only way to remove the impurities lurking in the mind.

Two things are indispensably requisite in the practice of Karma Yoga. The Karma Yogi should have non-attachment to the fruits of actions. He will have to dedicate his actions at the altar of God with the feeling of *Ishwararpana*. Non-attachment brings freedom from sorrow and fear. Non-attachment makes a man absolutely bold and fearless. When he dedicates his action at the Lotus Feet of the Lord, he develops devotion to God and approaches Him nearer and nearer. He gradually feels that God works directly through his *Indriyas* or instruments. He feels no strain or burden in the discharge of his works now. He is quite at ease. The heavy load which he felt previously on account of false notion has vanished out of sight now.



## PRACTICE OF KARMA YOGA

The practice of Karma Yoga does not demand that you should possess enormous wealth. You can serve with your mind and body. If you find a poor sick man lying on the road side, give him some water or milk to drink. Cheer him up with sweet, encouraging words. Put him in a carriage and take him to the nearest hospital. If you have no money to pay for the carriage, carry the patient on your back and see that he is admitted into the hospital. If you do service like this, your heart will be purified. God is more pleased with such sort of service for the poor helpless people than with the service done by rich people with pomp and vanity.

If any one is suffering from acute pain in any part of the body, at once shampoo the affected part very quickly. Feel, when you massage, that you are shampooing the body of the Lord (Virat). Repeat your Ishta Mantra or any name of the Lord while shampooing. Pray also from the bottom of your heart: "O Lord! Remove the pain of this man. Let him rest in peace. Let him possess good health." Feel, when you massage, that the energy from the cosmic source, Hiranyagarbha, is flowing continuously through your hands. Some neophytes are afraid their energy will be depleted by massaging another person. This is a serious mistake. The more you give, the more you will get. You will be in tune with the cosmic energy or the Infinite. This is the divine law.

## QUALIFICATIONS OF A KARMA YOGI

A Karma Yogi should be absolutely free from lust, greed, anger and egoism. Even if there are traces of these Doshas, he should try to remove them. He should not expect any kind of fruits for his ac-

tions herein and hereafter. He should not have any desire for name and fame, approbation, appreciation, thirst for applause, admiration and gratitude. He must have a spotless character. He should try to possess this gradually. He should be humble and free from hatred, jealousy, harshness, etc. He should always speak sweet words. How can a proud and jealous man, who expects respect and honour from others, serve others? He should be absolutely fearless. A timid man is absolutely unfit for Karma Yoga. He is fit to assist his wife in cleaning utensils in the kitchen in the morning and in washing her clothes in the evening.

A Karma Yogi should have a large heart. He should be free from crookedness, meanness, miserliness and selfishness. He should be absolutely free from greed, anger and egoism.

A Karma Yogi should have an amiable, loving social nature. He should be able to move and mix with everybody without distinction of caste, creed or colour. He should have perfect adaptability, tolerance, sympathy, cosmic love and mercy. He should be able to adjust with the habits and ways of others. He should have an all-embracing and all-inclusive heart. He should always have a cool and balanced mind. He should have presence of mind also. He should have equal vision. He should rejoice in the welfare of others. A man who is easily irritable and who can easily be offended for trifling things is absolutely unfit for the path of Karma Yoga. He should have all the organs under perfect control. He should lead a very simple life. He should bear insult, disrespect, dishonour, censure, infamy, disgrace, harsh words, heat, cold and the pain of diseases. He should have absolute faith in himself.

in God, in scriptures and in the words of his Guru. If he leads a life of luxury, if he wants everything for himself, how can he share his possessions with others? He should burn his selfishness to the very root. Let me remind you the words of the Gita: "Restraining and subduing the senses, regarding everything equally, rejoicing in the welfare of all, these alone come to Me." Such a man becomes a good Karma Yogi and reaches the goal quickly.

### BENEFITS OF KARMA YOGA

By doing selfless service you purify your heart. Egoism, hatred, jealousy, ideas of superiority and all the kindred negative qualities will vanish. You will develop humility, pure love, sympathy, tolerance and mercy. Sense of separateness will be annihilated. Selfishness will be eradicated. You will get a broad and liberal outlook on life. You will begin to feel oneness and unity. Eventually you will obtain knowledge of the Self. You will realise One in all and All in one.

Generally people are impatient and they expect Siddhis after doing a little service. The real Karma Yogi who serves people with humility and *Atma Bhava* (seeing God in every face) becomes a real ruler of the world. He is honoured and respected by all. The more service you do with *Atma Bhava* the more power, energy and capacity you get. Practise this and feel.

If you really want to grow in the spiritual path, you must do all sorts of service daily till the end of your life. Then only you are safe. Do not stop doing service

when you have become a famous Yogi. The spirit of service must enter every nerve, cell, tissue and bone of your body. It must become ingrained in you. Then only you will become a real, full-blown, practical Vedantin. Is there any greater Vedantin or Karma Yogi than Lord Buddha? He still lives in our hearts, because that spirit of service was ingrained in him and he spent his whole life in serving others in a variety of ways. He is indeed a magnanimous soul, one without a second. You can also become a Buddha if you apply yourself diligently to selfless service with the right mental attitude.

In the practice of Nishkama Karma Yoga, there is no loss of effort. There is no harm. There is no transgression also. Even a little of this practice can protect you from great fear of rebirth, of death with its concomitant evils. You will reap the fruits of Karma Yoga, viz., Jnana. There is no uncertainty here. The path of Karma Yoga eventually leads to the attainment of Bliss of the Self.

May you all attain purity of heart through constant selfless service. May you all shine as dynamic Karma Yogins radiating joy, peace and bliss everywhere. May you all rejoice in the welfare of all beings. May your minds be fixed in the Lord while your hands are in the service of humanity. May you all understand the principles and techniques of Karma Yoga. May all your actions become offerings unto the Lord. May you all attain Kaivalya Moksha through the practice of Karma Yoga in this very birth.

### *Sivananda on 'Peace'—12*

Love alone can bring peace to the world. Therefore love all. Only if everyone practises the religion of love, can there be peace in the world.



# Bhakti Yoga

## WHAT IS BHAKTI

The term *Bhakti* comes from the root '*Bhaj*', which means 'to be attached to God'. Bhajan, worship, Bhakti, Anurag, Prem, Priti are synonymous terms. Bhakti is love for love's sake. The devotee wants God and God alone. There is no selfish expectation here. There is no fear also. Therefore it is called 'Parama Prem Rupa'. The devotee feels, believes, conceives and imagines that his Ishtam is an Ocean of Love or Prem.

Bhakti is the slender thread of Prem or love that binds the heart of a devotee with the lotus feet of the Lord. Bhakti is intense devotion and supreme attachment to God. Bhakti is supreme love for God. It is the spontaneous out-pouring of Prem towards the Beloved. It is pure, unselfish, divine love or Suddha Prem. There is not a bit of bargaining or expectation of anything here. This higher feeling is indescribable in words. It has to be sincerely experienced by the devotee. Bhakti is a sacred, higher emotion with sublime sentiments that unites the devotees with the Lord.

Mark how love develops. First arises faith. Then follows attraction and after that adoration. Adoration leads to suppression of mundane desires. The result is single-mindedness and satisfaction. Then grow attachment and supreme love towards God.

In this type of highest Bhakti all attraction and attachment which one has for objects of enjoyment are transferred to the only dearest object, viz., God. This leads the devotee to an eternal union with his Beloved and culminates in oneness.

## TYPES OF BHAKTI

Bhakti is of various kinds. One classification is *Sakamya* and *Nishkamya* Bhakti. Sakamya Bhakti is devotion with desire for material gains. A man wants wealth and with this motive practises Bhakti. Another man wants freedom from diseases and therefore does Japa and offers prayers. A third one wants to become a Minister and does Upasana with this aim. This is Sakamya Bhakti. Whatever you want the Lord will certainly give you, if your Bhakti is intense and if your prayers are sincerely offered from the bottom of your heart. But you will not get supreme satisfaction, immortality and Moksha through Sakamya Bhakti.

Your Bhakti should always be Nishkamya Bhakti. God has already given you a good position, a good job, wife and children and enough wealth. Be contented with these. Aspire for Nishkamya Bhakti. Your heart will be purified and the Divine Grace will descend upon you. Be in communion with the Lord, you will become one with the Lord and you will enjoy all the Divine Aisvaryas. All the Vibhutis of the Lord He will give you. He will give you Darshan. He will help you to dwell in Him. At the same time He will give you all the Divine Aisvaryas also.

Another classification of Bhakti is *Apara-Bhakti* and *Para-Bhakti*. Apara-Bhakti is for the beginners in Yoga. The beginner decorates an image with flowers and garlands, rings the bell, offers Naivedya, waves lights; he observes rituals and ceremonies. The Bhakta here regards the Lord as a Supreme Person, who is immanent in that image and who can be propitiated through that form only. He has no

expanded heart. He is a sectarian. He dislikes other kinds of Bhaktas who worship other Devatas. Gradually, from Aparā-Bhakti, the devotee goes to Para-Bhakti, the highest form of Bhakti. He sees the Lord and Lord alone everywhere and feels His Power manifest as the entire universe. "Thou art all-pervading; on what Simhasana shall I seat Thee? Thou art the Supreme Light, in whose borrowed light the sun, the moon, the stars and the fire shine; shall I wave this little *Deepa* or light before You?"—thus the devotee recognises the transcendental nature of God. Para-Bhakti and Jnana are one. But every Bhakta will have to start from Aparā-Bhakti. Before you take your food, offer it to God mentally; and the food will be purified. When you pass through a garden of flowers, mentally offer all the flowers to the Lord in *Archana*. When you pass through the bazaar and see a sweetmeat shop, offer all the sweetmeats as *Naivedya* to the Lord. Such practices will lead to Para-Bhakti.

Bhakti is also classified into *Gauna-Bhakti* and *Mukhya-Bhakti*. *Gauna-Bhakti* is the lower Bhakti and *Mukhya-Bhakti* is the higher type of Bhakti.

Go from stage to stage. Just as a flower grows in the garden, so also gradually develop love or Prem in the garden of your heart.

The enemy of devotion is egoism and desire. Where there is no *Kama* or desire, there alone will Rama (the Lord) manifest Himself. The enemies of peace and devotion are lust, anger and greed. Anger destroys your peace and your health also. When a man abuses you, keep peaceful. When blood begins to boil, it is impoverished. You lose vitality if you become a prey to fits of temper.

## HOW TO CULTIVATE BHAKTI

It would be a gross mistake if you consider Bhakti as merely a stage of emotionalism, while it is actually a thorough discipline and training of one's will and the mind, a sure means to intuitive realisation of God Almighty through intense love and affection for Him. It is a means to thorough apprehension of the true knowledge of Reality, beginning from the ordinary form of idol worship right upto the highest form of cosmic realisation of your oneness with Him. You can achieve this by following the eleven fundamental factors which Sri Ramanuja had prescribed. They are *Abhyasa* or practice of continuous thinking of God; *Viveka* or discrimination; *Vimoka* or freedom from everything else and longing for God; *Satyam* or truthfulness; *Arjavam* or straightforwardness; *Kriya* or doing good to others; *Kalyana* or wishing well-being to all; *Daya* or compassion; *Ahimsa* or non-injury; *Dana* or charity; and *Anavasada* or cheerfulness and optimism.

People put a question: "How can we love God whom we have not seen?"

Live in the company of saints. Hear the Lilas of God. Study the sacred scriptures. Worship Him first in His several forms as manifested in the world. Worship any image or picture of the Lord or the Guru. Recite His Name. Sing His glories. Stay for one year in Ayodhya or Brindavan, Chitrakut or Pandharpur, Benares or Ananda Kutir. You will develop love for God.

Every act must be done that awakens the emotion of Bhakti. Keep the Puja room clean. Decorate the room. Burn incense. Light a lamp. Keep a clean seat. Bathe. Wear clean clothes. Apply Vibhuti or Bhasma, and Kumkum on the forehead.



Wear Rudraksha or Tulasi Mala. All these produce a benign influence on the mind and elevate the mind. They generate piety. They help to create the necessary Bhava or feeling to invoke the Deity that you want to worship. The mind will be easily concentrated.

Practice of right conduct, Satsanga, Japa, Smarana, Kirtan, prayer, worship, service of saints, residence in places of pilgrimage, service of the poor and the sick with divine Bhava, observance of Varnashrama duties, offering of all actions and their fruits to the Lord, feeling the presence of the Lord in all beings, prostrations before the image and saints, renunciation of earthly enjoyments and wealth, charity, austerities and vows, practice of Ahimsa, Satyam and Brahmacharya—all these will help you to develop Bhakti.

### BHAVAS IN BHAKTI

When the devotee grows in devotion there is absolute self-forgetfulness. This is called *Bhava*. Bhava establishes a true relationship between the devotee and the Lord. Bhava then grows into *Maha-Bhava* wherein the devotee lives, moves and has his being in the Lord. This is *Parama-Prema*, the consummation of love or Supreme Love.

There are five kinds of Bhava in Bhakti. They are *Shanta*, *Dasya*, *Sakhya*, *Vatsalya* and *Madhurya* Bhavas. These Bhavas or feelings are natural to human beings and so these are easy to practise. Practise whichever Bhava suits your temperament.

In *Shanta* Bhava, the devotee is *Shanta* or peaceful. He does not jump and dance. He is not highly emotional. His heart is filled with love and joy. Bhishma was a *Shanta* Bhakta.

Sri Hanuman was a *Dasya* Bhakta. He had *Dasya* Bhava, servant attitude. He

served Lord Rama whole-heartedly. He pleased his Master in all possible ways. He found joy and bliss in the service of his Master.

In *Sakhya* Bhava, God is a friend of the devotee. Arjuna had this Bhava towards Lord Krishna. The devotee moves with the Lord on equal terms. Arjuna and Krishna used to sit, eat, talk and walk together as intimate friends.

In *Vatsalya* Bhava, the devotee looks upon God as his child. Yasoda had this Bhava with Lord Krishna. There is no fear in this Bhava, because God is your pet child. The devotee serves, feeds, and looks upon God as a mother does in the case of her child.

The last is *Madhurya* Bhava or *Kanta* Bhava. This is the highest form of Bhakti. The devotee regards the Lord as his Lover. This was the relation between Radha and Krishna. This is *Atma-Samarpana*. The lover and the beloved become one. The devotee and God feel one with each other and still maintain a separateness in order to enjoy the bliss of the play of love between them. This is oneness in separation and separation in oneness. Lord Gauranga, Jayadeva, Mira and Andal had this Bhava.

### NAVA-VIDHA-BHAKTI

Devotion to God is developed in nine different ways. It is supreme attachment to God through a Bhava predominant in the devotee. Intense love is the common factor in all the nine modes. Exclusive love for God is expressed through various methods. All Bhaktas of this type are above the formalities of the world. They are untouched by the laws of human Dharma and are out and out concerned with God.

Good conduct which is in accordance with perfect moral law is an auxiliary to

pure Bhakti and it follows the true Bhakta wherever he goes. One cannot develop true devotion to God if he is crooked in his heart, if he has got objects of love in this world, if he is tempted by charming worldly things, if he wishes to take care of his wife, children and relatives, if he wishes to feed his body well, if he wishes to earn a great name in the world, if he wants to establish a permanent fame on earth, if he does not like to part with the alluring contents of the world. Perfect detachment from all objects is a preliminary to real devotion. Vairagya is the product of real love for God. One who has love for the world cannot have love for God. Where there is Kama, there cannot be Rama and where there is Rama there cannot be Kama. Love for the world and love for God are diametrically opposite things. One has to be renounced for the attainment of the other. This renunciation can be acquired through the nine forms of Bhakti.

In the Srimad-Bhagavata and the Vishnu Purana it is told that the nine forms of Bhakti are *Sravaṇa* (hearing of God's Lilas and stories), *Kirtana* (singing of His glories), *Smarana* (remembrance of His Name and presence), *Padasevana* (service of His feet), *Archana* (worship of God), *Vandana* (prostration to Lord), *Dasya* (cultivating the Bhava of a servant with God), *Sakhya* (cultivation of the friend-Bhava) and *Atmanivedana* (complete surrender of the self).

A devotee can practise any method of Bhakti which suits him best. Through that he will attain Divine illumination.

*Sravaṇa* is hearing of Lord's Lilas. *Sravaṇa* includes hearing of God's virtues, glories, sports and stories connected with His divine Name and Form. The devotee gets absorbed in the hearing of Divine sto-

ries and his mind merges in the thought of divinity; it cannot think of undivine things. The mind loses, as it were, its charm for the world. The devotee remembers God only even in dream.

The devotee should sit before a learned teacher who is a great saint and hear Divine stories. He should hear them with a sincere heart devoid of the sense of criticism or fault-finding. The devotee should try his best to live in the ideals preached in the scriptures.

One cannot attain *Sravaṇa-Bhakti* without the company of saints or wise men. Mere reading for oneself is not of much use. Doubts will crop up. They cannot be solved by oneself easily. An experienced man is necessary to instruct the devotee in the right path.

King Parikshit attained Liberation through *Sravaṇa*. He heard the glories of God from Suka Maharshi. His heart was purified. He attained the Abode of Lord Vishnu in Vaikuntha. He became liberated and enjoyed the Supreme Bliss.

*Kirtana* is singing of Lord's glories. The devotee is thrilled with Divine Emotion. He loses himself in the love of God. He gets horripilation in the body due to extreme love for God. He weeps in the middle when thinking of the glory of God. His voice becomes choked, and he flies into a state of divine Bhava. The devotee is ever engaged in Japa of the Lord's Name and in describing His glories to one and all. Wherever he goes he begins to sing and praise God. He requests all to join his *Kirtana*. He sings and dances in ecstasy. He makes others also dance.

*Smarana* is remembrance of the Lord at all times. This is unbroken memory of the Name and Form of the Lord. The mind does not think of any object of the



world, but is ever engrossed in thinking of the glorious Lord alone. The mind meditates on what is heard about the glories of God and His virtues, Names, etc., and forgets even the body and contents itself in the remembrance of God, just as Dhruva or Prahlada did. Even Japa is only remembrance of God and comes under this category of Bhakti. Remembrance also includes hearing of stories pertaining to God at all times, talking of God, teaching to others what pertains to God, meditation on the attributes of God, etc. Remembrance has no particular time. God is to be remembered at all times without break, so long as one has got his consciousness intact.

*Padasevana* is serving the Lord's Feet. Actually this can be done only by Lakshmi or Parvati. No mortal being has got the fortune to practise this method of Bhakti, for the Lord is not visible to the physical eyes. But it is possible to serve the image of God in idols and better still, taking the whole humanity as God. This is *Padasevana*. *Padasevana* is service of the sick. *Padasevana* is service of the poor. *Padasevana* is service of the whole humanity at large. The whole universe is only Virat-Swarupa. Service of the world is service of the Lord.

*Archana* is worship of the Lord. Worship can be done either through an image or a picture or even a mental form. The image should be one appealing to the mind of the worshipper.

Worship can be done either with external materials or merely through an internal Bhava or strong feeling. The latter one is an advanced form of worship which only men of purified intellect can do. The purpose of worship is to please the Lord,

to purify the heart through surrender of the ego and love of God.

*Vandana* is prayer and prostration. Humble prostration touching the earth with the eight limbs of the body (*Sashtanga-Namaskara*), with faith and reverence, before a form of God, or prostration to all beings knowing them to be the forms of the One God, and getting absorbed in the Divine Love of the Lord is termed prostration to God or *Vandana*.

The ego or *Ahamkara* is effaced out completely through devout prayer and prostration to God. Divine grace descends upon the devotee and man becomes God.

*Dasya Bhakti* is the love of God through servant-sentiment. To serve God and carry out His wishes, realising His virtues, nature, mystery and glory, considering oneself as a slave of God, the Supreme Master, is *Dasya Bhakti*.

Serving and worshipping the Murtis in temples, sweeping the temple premises, meditating on God and mentally serving Him like a slave, serving the saints and the sages, serving the devotees of God, serving poor and sick people who are forms of God, is also included in *Dasya-Bhakti*.

To follow the words of the scriptures, to act according to the injunctions of the Vedas, considering them to be direct words of God, is *Dasya Bhakti*. Association with and service of love-intoxicated devotees and service of those who have knowledge of God is *Dasya Bhakti*. The purpose behind *Dasya Bhakti* is to be ever with God in order to offer services to Him and win His Divine Grace and attain thereby immortality.

*Sakhya-Bhava* is the cultivation of the friend-sentiment with God. The inmates of the family of Nandagopa cultivated this Bhakti. Arjuna cultivated this kind of

Bhakti towards Lord Krishna.

To be always with the Lord, to treat Him as one's own dear relative or a friend belonging to one's own family, to be in His company at all times, to love Him as one's own Self, is Sakhya-Bhava of Bhakti-Marga. How do friends, real friends, love in this world? What an amount of love they possess between one another? Such a love is developed towards God instead of towards man; physical love turned into spiritual love. There is a transformation of the mundane into the Eternal.

*Atma-Nivedana* is self-surrender. The devotee offers everything to God, including his body, mind and soul. He keeps nothing for himself. He loses even his own self. He has no personal and independent existence. He has given up his self for God. He has become part and parcel of God. God takes care of him and God treats him as Himself. Grief and sorrow, pleasure and pain, the devotee treats as gifts sent by God and does not attach himself to them. He considers himself as a puppet of God and an instrument in the hands of God.

This self-surrender is Absolute Love for God exclusively. There is nothing but God-consciousness in the devotee. Even against his own wishes, the devotee shall become one with God and lose his individuality. This is the law of being. The highest truth is Absoluteness and the soul rises above through different states of consciousness until it attains Absolute Perfection when it becomes identical with God. This is the culmination of all aspiration and love.

The nine modes of Bhakti are the ways in which a devotee attains the Supreme Ideal of life. A devotee can take up any of these paths and reach the highest state. The path of Bhakti is the easiest of all

and is not very much against the nature of the human inclinations. It slowly and gradually takes the individual to the Supreme without frustrating his human instincts. It is not direct assertion of God, but a progressive realisation of Him.

### FRUITS OF BHAKTI

Bhakti softens the heart and removes jealousy, hatred, lust, anger, egoism, pride and arrogance. It infuses joy, divine ecstasy, bliss, peace and knowledge. All cares, worries and anxieties, fears, mental torments and tribulations entirely vanish. The devotee is freed from the Samsaric wheel of births and deaths. He attains the immortal abode of everlasting peace, bliss and knowledge.

The fruit of Bhakti is Jnana. Jnana intensifies Bhakti. Even Jnanis like Sankara, Madhusudana and Suka Dev took to Bhakti after Realisation to enjoy the sweetness of loving relationship with God.

Knowledge or wisdom will dawn by itself when you practise Bhakti Yoga. Bhakti is the pleasant, smooth, direct road to God. Bhakti is sweet in the beginning, sweet in the middle and sweet in the end. It gives the highest, undecaying bliss.

Kindle love divine in thy heart, for this is the immediate way to the Kingdom of God.

Pray to the Lord. Sing His glory. Recite His Name. Become a channel of His grace.

Seek His will. Do His will. Surrender to His will. You will become one with the cosmic will.

Surrender unto the Lord. He will become your charioteer on the field of life. He will drive your chariot well. You will reach the destination, the Abode of Immortal Bliss.



# Japa Yoga

## WHAT IS JAPA

Repetition of any Mantra or Name of the Lord is known as Japa. Japa is an important Anga of Yoga. It is a spiritual food for the hungry soul. Japa is the rod in the hands of the blind Sadhakas to plod on the road to Realisation. Japa is the philosopher's stone or divine elixir that makes one God-like. In this iron age, practice of Japa alone can give eternal Peace, Bliss and Immortality.

Japa is repetition of the Mantra. Dhyana is meditation on the form of the Lord with His attributes. There is meditation or Dhyana with Japa (Japa-Sahita-Dhyana); there is meditation or Dhyana without Japa (Japa-Rahita-Dhyana). In the beginning you should combine Dhyana with Japa. As you advance the Japa drops by itself; meditation only remains. It is an advanced stage. You can then practise concentration separately. You can do whatever you like best in this respect.

Name (*Nama*) and the object (*Rupa*) signified by the Name are inseparable. Thought and word are inseparable. Whenever you think of the name of your son, his figure stands before your mental eye, and vice versa. Even so when you do Japa of Rama, Krishna or Christ, the picture of Rama, Krishna or Christ will come before your mind. Therefore Japa and Dhyana go together. They are inseparable.

Do the Japa with feeling. Know the meaning of the Mantra. Feel God's presence in everything and everywhere. Draw closer and nearer to Him when you repeat the Japa. Think He is shining in the chambers of your heart. He is witnessing your repetition of the Mantra as He is the witness of your mind.

## MANTRA

*'Mananat-trayate iti Mantrah'*—By the *Manana* (constant thinking or recollection) of which one is protected or is released from the round of births and deaths, is Mantra. That is called Mantra by the meditation (*Manana*) on which the Jiva or the individual soul attains freedom from sin, enjoyment in heaven and final liberation, and by the aid of which it attains in full the fourfold fruit (*Chaturvarga*), i.e., *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kama* and *Moksha*. A Mantra is so called because it is achieved by the mental process. The root 'Man' in the word *Mantra* comes from the first syllable of that word, meaning 'to think', and 'Tra' from 'Trai' meaning 'to protect' or 'free' from the bondage of Samsara or the phenomenal world. By the combination of 'Man' and 'Tra' comes *Mantra*.

A Mantra is divinity encased within a sound-structure. It is divine power or *Daivi Sakti* manifesting in a sound-body. The Mantra is itself *Devata*.

The sacred Mantra or the Divine Name is a vital symbol of the Supreme Divinity directly revealed in the innermost depths of divine communion to the sages of Self-realisation in the hoary Vedic and Upanishadic times. These symbols are in the nature of unfailing keys to gain access into the transcendental realms of absolute experience.

Mantra Yoga is an exact science. A Mantra, in the Hindu religion, has the following six parts. It has got a *Rishi* (a man of Self-realisation) to whom it was revealed for the first time and who gave this Mantra to the world. He is the *Drashta* or Seer for this Mantra. Sage Viswamitra

is the Rishi for Gayatri. Secondly, the Mantra has a metre (*Chhandas*), which governs the inflection of the voice. Thirdly, the Mantra has a particular *Devata* or supernatural being, higher or lower, as its informing power. This *Devata* is the presiding deity of the Mantra. Fourthly, the Mantra has got a *Bija* or seed. The seed is a significant word, or series of words, which gives a special power to the Mantra. The *Bija* is the essence of the Mantra. Fifthly, every Mantra has got a *Sakti*. The *Sakti* is the energy of the form of the Mantra, i.e., of the vibration-forms set up by its sounds. These carry the man to the *Devata* that is worshipped. Lastly, the Mantra has a *Kilaka*—pillar or pin. This plugs the Mantra-Chaitanya that is hidden in the Mantra. As soon as the plug is removed by constant and prolonged repetition of the Name, the Chaitanya that is hidden is revealed. The devotee gets Darshana of the *Ishta Devata*.

### SOUND AND IMAGE

Sounds are vibrations. They give rise to definite forms. Each sound produces a form in the invisible world, and combinations of sound create complicated shapes.

The repetition of a Mantra has a mysterious power of bringing about the manifestation of the Divinity, just as the splitting of an atom manifests the tremendous forces latent in it. When a particular Mantra appropriated to a particular god is properly recited, the vibrations so set up create in the higher planes a special form which that god ensouls for the time being. The repetition of the Panchakshara Mantra—*Om Namah Shivaya*—produces the form of Lord Siva. The repetition of *Om Namo Narayanaya*, the Ashtakshara Mantra of Vishnu, produces the form of Vishnu.

### GLORY OF DIVINE NAME

The Name of God, chanted correctly or incorrectly, knowingly or unknowingly, carefully or carelessly, is sure to give the desired result. Just as burning quality is natural to and inherent in fire, so also, the power of destroying sins with their very root and branch, and bringing the aspirant into blissful union with the Lord through Bhava-Samadhi, is natural to and inherent in the Name of God.

The glory of the Name of God cannot be established through reasoning and intellect. It can be experienced or realised only through devotion, faith and constant repetition of the Name.

There is a *Sakti* or power in every word. If you utter the word 'excreta' or 'urine' when your friend is taking his meals, he may at once vomit his food. If you think of 'Garam Pakoda', 'hot Pakoda', your tongue will get salivation. When anyone suddenly shouts 'Scorpion! Scorpion!', 'Snake! Snake!', you at once apprehend the scorpion or the snake and jump in fright. When anyone calls you a 'donkey' or an 'ass', you are annoyed and you show anger. If anyone says, "You are a nice person," you smile. When such is the power of the names of the ordinary things of this world, what tremendous power should there be in the Name of God! God is the completion or the fullness of existence. Hence, the Name which denotes Him, too, is full and perfect. Therefore, the power of the Name of God is incalculable, for it is the height or the zenith of power. The Name of God can achieve anything. There is nothing impossible for it. It is the means to the realisation of God Himself. Even as the name of a thing in this world generates the consciousness of that thing in the mind,





## BENEFITS OF JAPA

Japa changes the mental substance from passion to purity, from Rajas to Satva. It calms and strengthens the mind. It makes the mind introspective. It checks the outgoing tendencies of the mind. It eradicates all kinds of evil thoughts and inclinations. It induces determination and austerity. Eventually it leads to the direct Darshana of God, the Ishta Devata, or tutelary Deity, or to God-realisation.

The mind is purified by constant Japa and worship. It is filled with good and pure thoughts. Repetition of Mantra and worship strengthen the good Samskaras. "As a man thinks, so he becomes." This is the psychological law. The mind of a man who trains himself in thinking good holy thoughts, develops a tendency to think of good thoughts. His character is moulded and transformed by continued good thoughts. When the mind thinks of the image of the Lord during Japa and worship, the mental substance actually assumes the form of

the image. The impression of the object is left in the mind. This is called *Samskara*. When the act is repeated very often, the Samskaras gain strength by repetition and a tendency or habit is formed in the mind. He who entertains thoughts of Divinity becomes transformed actually into the Divinity itself by constant thinking and meditation. His Bhava or disposition is purified and divinised. The meditator and the meditated, the worshipper and the worshipped, the thinker and the thought, become one and the same. This is *Samadhi*. This is the fruit of worship or Upasana or doing Japa.

O man! Take refuge in the Name. *Nami* and *Nama* are inseparable. Sing the Lord's Name incessantly. Remember the Name of the Lord with every incoming and outgoing breath. In this iron age *Namasmarana* or Japa is the easiest, quickest, safest and surest way to reach God and attain Immortality and perennial Joy. Glory to the Lord! Glory to His Name.

## Sankirtan Yoga

Sankirtan is the Svarupa of God. Dhvani is Sankirtan. Sankirtan is the essence of the Vedas. The four Vedas originate from sound. There are four kinds of sound, viz., *Vaikhari* (vocal), *Madhyama* (from the throat), *Pasyanti* (from the heart) and *Para* (from the navel). Sound originates from the navel. Vedas also originate from the navel. Sankirtan and Vedas are born from the same source.

People sit together and sing the names of the Lord with harmony and concord, and with Suddha or Divine Bhava. This is San-

kirtan. Sankirtan is accompanied by the play of musical sounds as the word 'San' precedes 'kirtan.' Sankirtan is an exact science. It elevates the mind quickly and intensifies the Bhava or divine feeling to a maximum degree.

*Nama* and *Nami* are inseparable. *Nama* means Name (Name of God). *Nami* means 'that which is denoted by the *Nama* or Name'. *Nama* is greater than the *Nami*. Even in worldly experience the man dies but his name is remembered for a long time. Kalidasa, Valmiki, Tulsidas, etc., are



remembered even today. *Nama* is nothing but Chaitanya. Sankirtan is singing God's name with Bhava, Prem or divine feeling.

Sankirtan Yoga is the easiest, quickest, safest, cheapest and best way for attaining God-realisation in this age. People cannot practise severe austerities nowadays. They do not have the strength of will to practise Hatha Yoga. They cannot maintain perfect life-long Brahmacharya. They do not have the prerequisites for Raja Yoga. They are not endowed with the keen intellect necessary for Jnana Yoga or Vedantic Sadhana. But this Sankirtan Yoga or the Yoga of Singing Lord's Names is within the reach of all.

There is infinite Sakti or power in the Lord's Names. It will remove all impurities from your mind. Vedantins say that there are three kinds of obstacles to Self-realisation—*Mala*, *Vikshepa* and *Avarana*. To remove them they prescribe Nishkamya Karma, Upasana and Vedantic Nididhyasana. This Sankirtan alone can achieve all these together. Sankirtan removes the impurities of the mind (*Mala*); it steadies the mind and checks its tendency to vacillate (*Vikshepa*); and ultimately it tears the veil of ignorance too (*Avarana*), and brings the Sadhaka face to face with God.

Maya is so powerful that she deludes you every moment. Every moment she makes you feel that there is pleasure only in the sense-objects and nowhere else. You mistake pain for pleasure. This is the work of Maya. Beware. Remember *Janma-*

*mrityu-jara-vyadhi-duhkha-dosha*, — this world is full of the pains of birth, death, old age, disease and misery. There is no pleasure in these finite objects. *Yo Vai Bhuma Tat Sukham*. You can have Bliss in the Infinite alone. Sankirtan will enable you to realise this Infinite here and now. Sankirtan will save you from Maya, from delusion. Therefore sing the Names of the Lord always.

Let us, therefore, sing the Maha Mantra:

Hare Rama Hare Rama  
Rama Rama Hare Hare,  
Hare Krishna Hare Krishna  
Krishna Krishna Hare Hare.

This is the great Mantra which is specially meant for the people of Kali Yuga. Narada went to Lord Brahma and said: "O Lord, the people of Kali Yuga will not be able to practise austerities, nor to perform the Yajnas, nor to pursue the path of Vedanta. Kindly have mercy on them and tell me some easy way by which they can attain God." Lord Brahma in His Supreme Compassion and Mercy gave this Maha Mantra by repeating which people of the Kali Yuga will attain Self-realisation. Therefore, sing the Lord's Names; serve, love, give, meditate, realise; be good and do good (this is the essence of all scriptures); be kind and be compassionate; enquire "Who am I?", know the Self and be free. May God bless you all with health, long life, peace, prosperity and Eternal Bliss.

### *Sivananda on 'Peace'—13*

Ethics should be put into practice by all. This alone will contribute to peace, universal love, unity, proper understanding, world harmony and brotherhood of mankind.

# Hatha Yoga

'Health is wealth'. Good health is the greatest asset for you. Without good health you can hardly expect success in any walk of life. Even for spiritual pursuits, good health is the prerequisite.

Hatha Yoga is a Divine Blessing for attaining good health. Body and mind are instruments which the practice of Hatha Yoga keeps sound, strong and full of energy. It is a unique armour of defence to battle the opposing forces in the material and spiritual fields. By its practice you can annihilate *Adhi-Vyadhi* and attain radiant health and God-realisation.

Hatha Yoga means the Yoga or union between 'Ha' and 'Tha'. 'Ha' means the sun. 'Tha' means the moon. Prana is known by the name of the sun. Apana is known by the name of the moon. Therefore, Hatha Yoga is the union of the Prana and the Apana. Hatha Yoga prepares the student for Raja Yoga. It is only an auxiliary to Raja Yoga.

Hatha Yoga is a perfectly practical system of self-culture. You can attain harmonious development of your body, mind, intellect and soul by the practice of Yoga. It is an exact science. Hatha Yoga deals with a system of Yogic exercises of the Indian Rishis and Yogins of yore based on scientific principles. There is no vague doctrine here. It imparts to every practitioner definite practical knowledge, fine health, longevity, strength, vim and vitality. You can acquire absolute control over the whole of nature by the practice of Yoga. It will help you to attain ethical perfection, perfect concentration of mind and unfold various psychic powers.

Shad-Kriyas (Dhauti, Basti, Neti, Nau-

li, Tratak and Kapalabhati), Asanas, Pranayama, Mudras, Bandhas and exercises in concentration and meditation, constitute Hatha Yoga, which leads to the awakening of the Kundalini Sakti and ultimate union with God in Samadhi. Shad-Kriyas are preliminary purificatory processes. Asanas pertain to the physical body and the nerve-centres. They render the body firm and steady, and eradicate physical ailments and inertia. Pranayama aims at the control of the vital breath. Bandhas pertain to the Prana. That which binds Prana is a Bandha. They do not allow the Prana to move upwards and the Apana to move downwards. They bind and unite the Prana with the Apana and send the united Prana-Apana along the Sushumna Nadi. Mudras concern the mind. They represent seals. Mudra means a seal. They seal the mind with the soul or Atman. They do not allow the mind to wander outside towards objects. They direct the externalising mind towards the Atman in the chambers of the heart and fix it there. A combination of these is essential.

Hatha Yoga itself is an indispensable part of Raja Yoga. The aim of Hatha Yoga is Raja Yoga, viz., Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi. Hatha Yoga is a great help to the practice of Raja Yoga. It removes Tamas (inertia) and Rajas (restlessness of the mind and the body). It gives one easy mastery over the turbulent senses. He who practises Asanas and Pranayama regularly will be very soon established in Yama-Niyama.

Asanas are a great help to the aspirant on the path of Raja Yoga. No one should neglect the practice of Hatha Yoga, be he a Raja Yogi, Vedantin or Bhakta.



# Raja Yoga

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF YOGA

It is said that the original propounder of classical Yoga was Hiranyagarbha Himself. It is Patanjali Maharshi who formulated this science into a definite system under the name of Ashtanga Yoga or Raja Yoga. This forms one of the Shad-Darsanas or Classical Systems of Philosophy. Vyasa has explained the original aphorisms or Yoga Sutras of Patanjali and this has been further elaborated through a gloss by a learned author named Vachaspati Mishra, and through the celebrated writings of Vijnana Bhikshu.

The Yoga, in allegiance to the Sankhya, holds that there is an eternal and omnipresent inert *Prakriti* and a plurality of omnipresent Conscious *Purusha*. The Yoga accepts a third principle, viz., *Ishvara*. The contact of the *Purusha* with *Prakriti* makes the latter evolve itself into its various effects. The *Purusha*, due to *Aviveka*, feels that it is an individual on account of its identification with *Prakriti* and its modifications.

The Yoga concerns itself with the method of freeing the *Purusha* from this bondage through right effort. Yoga is, thus, more a practical way of attainment than a philosophical excursion into the realms of the Spirit. As a Darsana, it is Sa-Ishvara Sankhya, i.e., it sanctions the twenty-five Tattvas of the Sankhya and adds one more, *Ishvara*. In doing so, Yoga fulfills its own characteristic of being an utterly practical system of Sadhana. When covered over by the veil of ignorance (*Aviveka*), the *Purusha* imagines that He is imperfect, incomplete, and that fulfilment can be had only in His conjunction with *Prakriti*. The

*Purusha* then, so to say, begins to gaze at *Prakriti*; and in the light of His Consciousness, the inert *Prakriti* commences its kaleidoscopic display of objects. The *Purusha*, due to *Prakriti*-*Samyoga*, appears to desire for enjoyment of these objects. He acts, as it were. He seems to grasp the objects. Now bondage, though not essential to the *Purusha*, is complete and the vicious circle is kept up. Transmigration of the individual is the consequence of *Aviveka* and its effects. Yoga by its scientific processes cuts these three knots one by one and leads to *Kaivalya Moksha* which is the realisation of the true nature of the *Purusha* as independent of *Prakriti* and its evolutes.

Deep within everyone there is an abiding faith in a Supreme Being, someone to whom a *Sadhaka* can look up for help and guidance, for protection and inspiration. But the ego does not allow this to happen. Disentanglement of the *Purusha* from the ego alone can lead to Its release from the snares of *Prakriti*. The ego can hardly be subdued by subjective analysis only; but it is easy to discriminate this ego as separate from the *Purusha* when it is voluntarily offered as a sacrifice at the altar of self-surrender to a Supreme Being, *Ishvara-pranidhana*. This is the hypothesis of the Yoga, in addition to its exhortation to put forth effort (*Sadhana-Marga*).

## YOGA SUTRAS OF PATANJALI

Raja Yoga is the king of all Yogas. It concerns directly with the mind. In this Yoga there is no struggling with *Prana* or physical body. There are no Hatha Yogic Kriyas. The Yogi sits at ease, watches his mind and silences the bubbling thoughts. He stills the mind, restrains the thought-

waves and enters into the thoughtless state or Asamprajnata Samadhi. Hence the name Raja Yoga. Though Raja Yoga is a dualistic philosophy and treats of Prakriti and Purusha, it helps the student in Advaitic Realisation of oneness eventually. Though there is the mention of Purusha, ultimately the Purusha becomes identical with the Highest Self or Purusha, or Brhman of Upanishads. Raja Yoga pushes the student to the highest rung of the spiritual ladder of Advaitic realisation of Brahman.

Patanjali's Yoga system is written in Sutras. A 'Sutra' is a terse verse. It is an aphoristic saying. It is pregnant with deep, hidden significance. Rishis of yore have expressed philosophical ideas and their realisation in the form of Sutras only. It is very difficult to understand the meaning of the Sutras without the help of a commentary, a gloss or a teacher who is well-versed in Yoga. A Yogi with full realisation can explain the Sutras beautifully. Literally, Sutra means a thread. Just as various kinds of flowers with different colours are nicely arranged in a string, to make a garland, just as rows of pearls are beautifully arranged in a string to form a necklace, so also Yogic ideas are well-arranged in Sutras. They are arranged into Chapters.

The First Chapter is Samadhi-pada. It deals with different kinds of Samadhi. It contains 51 Sutras. Obstacles in meditation, five kinds of Vritti and their control, three kinds of Vairagya, nature of Ishvara, various methods to enter into Samadhi and the way to acquire peace of mind by developing virtues are described here.

The Second Chapter is Sadhana-pada. It contains 55 Sutras. It treats of Kriya Yoga, viz., *Tapas*, study and self-surrender to God, the five Kleshas or afflictions, the methods to destroy these afflictions which stand in the way of getting Samadhi, Yama

and Niyama and their fruits, practice of Asana and its benefits, Pratyahara and its advantage, etc.

The Third Chapter is Vibhuti-pada. It contains 56 Sutras. It treats of Dharana, Dhyana and various kinds of Samyama on external objects, mind, internal Chakras and on several objects, to acquire various Siddhis.

The Fourth Chapter is Kaivalya-pada or Independence. It contains 34 Sutras. It treats of the Independence of a full-blown Yogi who has perfect discrimination between Prakriti and Purusha, and who has separated himself from the three Gunas. It also deals with mind and its nature. Dharmamegha Samadhi also is described here.

### STATES OF THE MIND

Raja Yoga is mainly concerned with the mind, its modifications and its control. There are five states of the mind—*Kshipta*, *Mudha*, *Vikshipta*, *Ekagra* and *Niruddha*. Usually the mind is running in various directions; its rays are scattered. This is the *Kshipta* state. Sometimes it is self-forgetful, it is full of foolishness (*Mudha*). When you try to practise concentration, the mind seems to get concentrated but gets distracted often. This is *Vikshipta*. But with prolonged and repeated practice of concentration again and again, and repeating Lord's Name, it becomes one-pointed. This is called the *Ekagra* state. Later on, it is fully controlled (*Niruddha*). It is ready to be dissolved in the Supreme Purusha, when you get Asamprajnata Samadhi.

To have peace of mind, you will have to cultivate the four great virtues—*Maitri*, *Karuna*, *Mudita* and *Upeksha*. *Maitri* (friendliness) you should have towards equals. You should have *Karuna* (compass-



sion) for those who are in distress. You should have *Mudita* (complacency) towards those who are superior to you. Complacency will destroy jealousy. All are your brothers. If a man is placed in a better position, feel happy over it. When you come across wicked people, be indifferent to them. This is *Upeksha* (indifference). By these methods, you will have peace of mind.

### AFFLICTIONS

The five kinds of afflictions are: *Avidya* (ignorance), *Asmita* (egoism), *Raga* (attraction), *Dvesha* (aversion) and *Abhinivesha* (clinging to mundane life). *Samadhi* destroys all this. *Raga* and *Dvesha* have five states—*Udara* (fully manifest), *Vicchinna* (hidden), *Tanu* (thinned out), *Prasupta* (dormant) and *Dagdha* (burnt). In worldly-minded people who are sunk in worldliness, *Raga* and *Dvesha* assume an *Udara Avastha*; they are in an expanded state i.e., they have a full and unhampered play. *Vicchinna Avastha* is that state in which *Raga* and *Dvesha* are hidden. The husband and wife sometimes quarrel; then love is temporarily hidden. Again she smiles; then love comes back. This is *Vicchinna Avastha*. Some people do a little bit of *Pranayama*, *Kirtan* and *Japa*. In them *Raga* and *Dvesha* become thinned out (*Tanu Avastha*). Sometimes, on account of unsuitable conditions, they lie dormant (*Prasupta Avastha*). In *Samadhi* they are burnt—*Dagdha*. *Raga* and *Dvesha* constitute this *Samsara*. They constitute the mind. Mind is a force which has no real entity but appears to be for the time being, and deludes the *Jivas*. It is superior to *Prana*. It is superior to matter. But, above the mind there is discrimination. Discrimination can control the mind; enquiry into your real nature or *Atma-Vichara* can con-

trol the mind. If you destroy the *Raga-Dvesha* through meditation and *Samadhi*, the mind will be annihilated. Your effort should be daily to practise concentration, even for five or ten minutes; then you will be able to control the mind and enter into *Samadhi*.

### OBSTACLES IN MEDITATION

There are several obstacles to meditation. *Vedanta* describes the obstacles to be *Laya*, *Vikshepa*, *Kashaya* and *Rasasvada*. *Patanjali* says: "Disease, dullness, doubt, carelessness, laziness, worldly-mindedness, illusion, missing the point, unstability—these are the obstacles in Yoga." Grief, melancholy, tremor of the body, inhalation and exhalation are the auxiliaries to these main obstacles. You will have to remove all these obstacles. During meditation, if you are overpowered by sleep, stand up, dash cold water on the face, practise a few *Asanas* and *Pranayama*. Sleep will go. Another age-old practice is, for those who have a '*choti*' (tuft of hair), to tie the tuft to a nail of the wall by means of a thread—if you doze during meditation, the nail on the wall will pull you up. Take light food at night. *Abhyasa* and *Vairagya* are the best means of avoiding all obstacles. *Vairagya* is not running away from the world. *Vairagya* is a mental state. Analyse your thoughts. Scrutinise your motives. Give up the objects that your mind likes most, atleast for some time. When the craving for them has vanished, then you can take them, as a master.

### THREE CLASSES OF ASPIRANTS

*Raja Yoga* is the royal road to freedom from misery. It treats of the four great principles: misery, its cause, freedom from misery and the means. The practice of the methods prescribed in *Raja Yoga* leads to

the cessation of all miseries and the attainment of eternal bliss. Practise from today. Never miss a day. Remember each day brings you nearer to the end of this earthly existence as a human being. You have wasted many days, many months and many years. You do not realise it because you have drunk deep the liquor of Moha. Therefore, you do not understand the real cause of the miseries of this earthly life.

The cause of this misery is *Avidya*. When the sun of discrimination arises within, the Purusha realises that He is distinct from Prakriti, that He is independent and unaffected. Raja Yoga gives you a most practical method of bringing about this exalted state.

According to Raja Yoga, there are three types of aspirants—*Uttama*, *Madhyama* and *Adhama Adhikaris*. To three classes of aspirants Raja Yoga prescribes three kinds of Sadhana. To the Uttama Adhikari (first-class aspirant) Raja Yoga prescribes *Abhyasa* and *Vairagya*. He practises meditation on the Self; he practises Chitta-Vritti-Nirodha, and soon enters into Samadhi. This is practice (*Abhyasa*) sustained by *Vairagya*. To the Madhyama Adhikari (middling aspirant) Raja Yoga prescribes the *Kriya Yoga*—*Tapas*, *Svadhyaya* and *Ishvarapranidhana*. *Tapas* is austerity. Egolessness and selfless service are the greatest forms of *Tapas*. Humility and desirelessness are the greatest forms of austerity. Practise these through ceaseless, untiring, selfless service. Practise the three kinds of *Tapas* mentioned in the Gita. Disciplinary practices like fasting, etc., also come under *Tapas*. *Svadhyaya* is study of spiritual literature and also Japa of your Ishta Mantra. *Ishvarapranidhana* is self-surrender to the Lord and doing all actions as *Ishvararpana*, as offering unto the Lord. These three form the Sadhanas of the Ma-

dhyama Adhikari who enters into deep meditation very soon and attains Kaivalya Moksha. To the Adhama Adhikari, lowest kind of aspirant, Raja Yoga prescribes Ashtanga Yoga or the eightfold Sadhana—*Yama*, *Niyama*, *Asana*, *Pranayama*, *Pratyahara*, *Dharana*, *Dhyana* and *Samadhi*.

### ASHTANGA YOGA

Patanjali's Raja Yoga is generally termed the Ashtanga Yoga or the Yoga of Eight Limbs, through the practice of which Freedom is achieved. These eight limbs are: (1) *Yama* or Eternal Vows—*Ahimsa* (non-violence), *Satya* (truth), *Asteya* (non-stealing), *Brahmacharya* (continence) and *Aparigraha* (non-avariciousness); (2) *Niyama* or Observances—*Saucha* (purity), *Santosha* (contentment), *Tapas* (austerities), *Svadhyaya* (study of scriptures) and *Ishvarapranidhana* (surrender to God); (3) *Asana* (firm, comfortable meditative posture); (4) *Pranayama* (the regulation of the Vital Force); (5) *Pratyahara* (abstraction of the senses and mind from objects); (6) *Dharana* (concentration); (7) *Dhyana* (meditation); and (8) *Samadhi* (superconscious state or trance). These eight limbs have been scientifically arranged and dealt with. They are the natural steps in the ladder which takes man from his human to the real divine nature. From the gross to the subtle, all the chords that bind the Purusha to Prakriti are cut asunder. This snapping of the ties releases the Purusha to enjoy his Independence, Kaivalya Moksha. This is the goal of Raja Yoga.

*Yama* and *Niyama* purify the individual's actions and make them more Sattvic. *Tamas* and *Rajas* which are the pillars of Samsara are pulled down through the practice of the Ten Canons of *Yama* and *Niyama*. Inner purity is increased. The individual's nature itself is made Sattvic.



Asana gives the individual control over the Rajasic impulses; and at the same time it forms the foundation of the grand structure of Antaranga Sadhana, or the Inner Yoga-process. Pranayama brings the aspirant face to face with the Life-Principle. Control of this Life-Principle gives him an insight into its motive force. He is made aware of the fact that it is desire that sustains the life-force. Desire is the cause of the externalisation of the mind. Desire is the bed of Vrittis. Vrittis together form the mind, and it is the mind that links the Purusha with Prakriti. The mind or the Chitta is the subtlest form of Prakriti's manifestations. If mind is to be destroyed, Vrittis are to be eradicated. If Vrittis are to be eradicated, desire is to be rooted out. The Yogi then rapidly withdraws all the rays of the mind from their external propulsion (Pratyahara). To find the root of the mind, the Seed-Desire, he needs the light of the whole mind. At the same time, prevention of the externalisation of the mind breaks the vicious circle, as desire is deprived of its active manifestation. This concentrated beam of light is then directed towards the root of the mind itself (Dharana); and mind is held in check. Now the consciousness which had so long been flowing outward collects itself and flows back into its source—the Purusha within, which is Dhyana. The link with Prakriti is gone. The Purusha experiences the transcendental state of independence—Kaivalya—in Nirvikalpa Samadhi. Now ignorance is destroyed. The Purusha realises that it was only His consciousness that gave Prakriti its power to please Him, to give Him joy, to delude Him, and to bind Him. He enjoys the bliss of His own nature and remains for ever independent and bliss-

ful. All thought ceases once for all in Nirvikalpa Samadhi. The seeds of Desire and of Vasanas and Samskaras are fried in toto; this is Nirbija Samadhi. The Yogi in this supreme state loses all external consciousness, all awareness of duality and multiplicity; he loses even the I-idea (Asmita) in Asamprajnata Samadhi. That is the Supreme State where the Seer (Purusha) is established in His own Svaroop.

Do not imagine that you are an Uttama Adhikari and that you have only to sit in meditation and enter into Samadhi. You will have a terrible downfall. Even after years of practice you will find you have not progressed an inch forward, because there are deep within you lurking desires and cravings, evil Vrittis which are far beyond your reach. Be humble. Make a searching analysis of your heart and mind. Even if you are really a first-class aspirant, think you are an aspirant of the lowest class and practise the eightfold Sadhana prescribed by Raja Yoga. The more time you spend in the first two steps, viz., Yama and Niyama, the less will be the time needed to attain perfection in meditation. It is the preparation that takes very long. But do not wait for perfection in Yama and Niyama, in order to take up the higher practices of Asana, Pranayama and meditation. Try to get established in Yama and Niyama, and at the same time practise Asana, Pranayama and meditation as much as you can. The two must go hand in hand. Then success will be rapid. You will soon enter into Nirvikalpa Samadhi and attain Kaivalya Moksha. What that supreme state is no one has expressed, and no words can describe. Practise, O bold aspirant, and realise it for yourself. May you shine as a Yogi in this very birth!

# Jnana Yoga

## INTRODUCTION

*Jnana* is knowledge. To know Brahman as one's own Self is *Jnana*. To say, "I am Brahman, the pure, all-pervading Consciousness, the non-enjoyer, non-doer and silent witness," is *Jnana*. To behold the one Self everywhere is *Jnana*.

*Ajnana* is ignorance. To identify oneself with the illusory vehicles of body, mind, Prana and the senses is *Ajnana*. To say, "I am the doer, the enjoyer, I am a Brahmin, a Brahmachari, this is mine, he is my son," is *Ajnana*. *Jnana* alone can destroy *Ajnana*, even as light alone can remove darkness.

Brahman, the Supreme Self, is neither the doer of actions nor the enjoyer of the fruit of actions. The creation, preservation and destruction of the world are not due to Him. They are due to the action of *Maya*, the Lord's energy manifesting itself as the world-process.

Just as space appears to be of three kinds—absolute space, space limited by a jar, and space reflected in the water of a jar,—so also there are three kinds of intelligence. They are absolute intelligence, intelligence reflected in *Maya*, and intelligence reflected in the *Jiva* (the individual soul). The notion of the doer is the function of intelligence as reflected in the intellect. This, together with the notion of *Jiva*, is superimposed by the ignorant on the pure and limitless Brahman, the silent witness.

The illustration of space absolute, space limited by a jar and space reflected in water of a jar, is given to convey the idea that in reality Brahman alone is. Because of *Maya*, however, It appears as three.

The notion that the reflection of intelligence is real, is erroneous, and is due to ignorance. Brahman is without limitations; limitation is a superimposition on Brahman.

The identity of the Supreme Self and the *Jiva* or reflected self is established through the statement of the Upanishad '*Tat Twam Asi*'—"That Thou Art". When the knowledge of the identity of the two arises, then world problems and ignorance, with all their offshoots, are destroyed and all doubts disappear.

Self-realisation or direct intuitive perception of the Supreme Self is necessary for attaining freedom and perfection. This *Jnana Yoga* or the path of Wisdom is, however, not meant for the masses whose hearts are not pure enough and whose intellects are not sharp enough to understand and practise this razor-edge path. Hence, Karma Yoga and Upasana (*Bhakti*) are to be practised first, which will render the heart pure and make it fit for the reception of Knowledge.

## BRAHMAN AND MAYA

Brahman is *Sat*, the Absolute, Reality. That which exists in the past, present and future; which has no beginning, middle and end; which is unchanging and not conditioned by time, space and causation; which exists during the waking, dream and deep sleep states; which is of the nature of one homogeneous essence, is *Sat*. This is found in Brahman, the Absolute. The scriptures emphatically declare: "Only *Sat* was prior to the evolution of this universe."

This phenomenal universe is unreal.  
—Isvara created this universe out of His own



body (Maya), just as a spider creates a web from its own saliva. It is merely an appearance, like a snake in a rope or like silver in mother-of-pearl. It has no independent existence.

It is difficult to conceive how the Infinite comes out of Itself and becomes the finite. The magician can bring forth a rabbit out of a hat. We see it happening but we cannot explain it; so we call it Maya or illusion.

Maya is a strange phenomenon which cannot be accounted for by any law of Nature. It is incapable of being described. Its relation to Brahman is like that of heat to fire. The heat of fire is neither one with it nor different from it.

Does Maya really exist or not? The Advaitin gives this reply: "This inscrutable Maya cannot be said either to exist or not to exist".

If we know the nature of Brahman, then all names, forms and limitations fall away. The world is Maya because it is not the essential truth of the infinite Reality—Brahman. Somehow the world exists and its relation to Brahman is indescribable. The illusion vanishes through the attainment of knowledge of Brahman. Sages, Rishis and scriptures declare that Maya vanishes entirely as soon as knowledge of the Supreme Self dawns.

Brahman alone really exists. The Jiva, the world and this little "I" are false. Rise above names and forms and kill the false egoism. Go beyond Maya and annihilate ignorance. Constantly meditate on the Supreme Brahman, your divine nature.

The world is unreal when compared to Brahman. It is a solid reality to a worldly and passionate man only. To a realised sage it exists like a burnt cloth. To a Videhamukta (disembodied sage) it does not

exist at all. To a man of discrimination it loses its charm and attraction.

Do not leave the world to enter a forest because you now read that the world is unreal. You will be utterly ruined if you do this without proper qualifications. Be first established in the conviction that the world is unreal and Brahman alone is real. This will help you to develop dispassion and a strong yearning for liberation. Stay in the world but be not worldly; strive for liberation by the practice of Sadhana Chatusthaya.

### SADHANA CHATUSHTAYA

Jnana Yoga or Brahma Vidya or the science of the Self is not a subject that can be understood and realised through mere intellectual study, reasoning, ratiocination, discussions or arguments. It is the most difficult of all sciences.

A student who treads the path of Truth must, therefore, first equip himself with Sadhana Chatusthaya—the "four means of salvation". They are discrimination, dispassion, the sixfold qualities of perfection, and intense longing for liberation,—*Viveka*, *Vairagya*, *Shad-Sampat* and *Mumukshutva*. Then alone will he be able to march forward fearlessly on the path. Not an iota of spiritual progress is possible unless one is endowed with these four qualifications.

These four means are as old as the *Vedas* and this world itself. Every religion prescribes them; the names differ from path to path but this is immaterial. Only ignorant people have the undesirable habit of practising lingual warfare and raising unnecessary questions. Pay no attention to them. It is your duty to try to eat the fruit instead of wasting time in counting the leaves of the tree. Try now to understand these four essential requisites for salvation.

*Viveka* is discrimination between the real and the unreal, between the permanent and the impermanent, between the Self and the non-Self. *Viveka* dawns in a man through the Grace of God. The Grace can come only after one has done unceasing selfless service in countless births with the feeling that he is an instrument of the Lord and that the work is an offering to the Lord. The door to the higher mind is flung open when there is an awakening of discrimination.

There is an eternal, changeless principle amidst the ever-changing phenomena of this vast universe and the fleeting movements and oscillations of the mind.

The aspirant should separate himself also from the six waves of the ocean of *Samsara*—birth and death, hunger and thirst, and exhilaration and grief. Birth and death belong to the physical body; hunger and thirst belong to *Prana*; exhilaration and grief are the attributes of the mind. The Soul is unattached. The six waves cannot touch Brahman which is as subtle as the all-pervading ether.

Association with saints and study of Vedantic literature will infuse discrimination in man. *Viveka* should be developed to the maximum degree. One should be well established in it.

*Vairagya* is dispassion for the pleasures of this world and of heaven. The *Vairagya* that is born of *Viveka* is enduring and lasting. It will not fail the aspirant. But the *Vairagya* that comes temporarily to a woman when she gives birth to a child or when one attends a funeral at a crematorium, is of no use. The view that everything in the world is unreal causes indifference to the enjoyments of this world and the heaven-world also. One has to return from heaven to this plane of exis-

tence when the fruits of good works are all exhausted. Hence they are not worth striving for.

*Vairagya* does not mean abandoning one's social duties and responsibilities of life. It does not mean abandoning the world, nor life in a solitary cave of the Himalayas. *Vairagya* is mental detachment from all worldly objects. One may remain in the world and discharge all duties with detachment. He may be a householder with a large family, yet at the same time he may have perfect mental detachment from everything. He can do spiritual *Sadhana* amidst his worldly activities. He who has perfect mental detachment in the world is a hero indeed. He is better than a *Sadhu* living in a Himalayan cave, for the former has to face innumerable temptations every moment of his life.

The third requisite is *Shad-Sampat*, the sixfold virtue. It consists of *Sama*, *Dama*, *Uparati*, *Titiksha*, *Sraddha* and *Samadhana*. All these six qualities are taken as one because they are calculated to bring about mental control and discipline, without which concentration and meditation are impossible.

1. *Sama* is serenity or tranquillity of mind which is brought about through the eradication of desires.

2. *Dama* is rational control of the senses.

3. *Uparati* is satiety; it is resolutely turning the mind away from desire for sensual enjoyment. This state of mind comes naturally when one has practised *Viveka*, *Vairagya*, *Sama* and *Dama*.

4. *Titiksha* is the power of endurance. An aspirant should patiently bear the pairs of opposites such as heat and cold, pleasure and pain, etc.



5. *Sraddha* is intense faith in the words of the Guru, in Vedantic scriptures and, above all, in one's own self. It is not blind faith but is based on accurate reasoning, evidence and experience. As such, it is lasting, perfect and unshakable. Such a faith is capable of achieving anything.

6. *Samadhana* is fixing the mind on Brahman or the Self, without allowing it to run towards objects. The mind is free from anxiety amid pains and troubles. There is stability, mental poise and indifference amid pleasures. The aspirant has neither likes nor dislikes. He has great inner strength and enjoys unruffled peace of mind, due to the practices of *Sama*, *Dama*, *Uparati*, *Titiksha* and *Sraddha*.

*Mumukshutva* is intense desire for liberation or deliverance from the wheel of births and deaths with its concomitant evils of old age, disease, delusion and sorrow. If one is equipped with the previous three qualifications (*Viveka*, *Vairagya* and *Shad-Sampat*), then the intense desire for liberation will come without any difficulty. The mind moves towards the Source of its own accord when it has lost its charm for external objects. When purification of mind and mental discipline are achieved, the longing for liberation dawns by itself.

The aspirant who is endowed with all these four qualifications should then approach the Guru who will instruct him on the knowledge of his real nature. The Guru is one who has a thorough knowledge of the scriptures and is also established in that knowledge in direct experience. He should then reflect and meditate on the inner Self and strive earnestly to attain the goal of Self-realisation.

A Sadhaka should reflect and meditate. *Sravaṇa* is hearing of *Srutis*, *Manana* is thinking and reflecting, *Nididhyasana* is con-

stant and profound meditation. Then comes *Atma-Sakshatkara* or direct realisation.

### THE SEVEN STAGES OF JNANA

There are seven stages of Jnana or the seven *Jnana Bhumikas*. First, Jnana should be developed through a deep study of *Atma Jnana Sastras* and association with the wise and the performance of virtuous actions without any expectation of fruits. This is *Subheccha* or good desire, which forms the first *Bhumika* or stage of Jnana. This will irrigate the mind with the waters of discrimination and protect it. There will be non-attraction or indifference to sensual objects in this stage. The first stage is the substratum of the other stages. From it the next two stages, viz., *Vicharana* and *Tanumanasi* will be reached. Constant *Atma Vichara* (*Atmic enquiry*) forms the second stage. The third stage is *Tanumanasi*. This is attained through the cultivation of special indifference to objects. The mind becomes thin like a thread. Hence the name *Tanumanasi*. *Tanu* means thread—thread-like state of mind. The third stage is also known by the name *Asanga Bhavana*. In the third stage, the aspirant is free from all attractions. If any one dies in the third stage, he will remain in heaven for a long time and will reincarnate on earth again as a Jnani. The above three stages can be included under the *Jagrat* state. The fourth stage is *Sattvapatti*. This stage will destroy all *Vasanas* to the root. This can be included under the *Svapna* state. The world appears like a dream. Those who have reached the fourth stage will look upon all things of the universe with an equal eye. The fifth stage is *Asamsakti*. There is perfect non-attachment to the objects of the world. There is no *Upadhi* or waking or sleeping in this stage. This is the *Jivan-*

mukti stage in which there is the experience of Ananda Svaroopā (the Eternal Bliss of Brahman) replete with spotless Jnana. This will come under Sushupti. The sixth stage is *Padārtha Bhavana*. There is knowledge of Truth. The seventh stage is *Turiya*, or the state of superconsciousness. This is Moksha. This is also known by the name *Turiyatita*. There are no Sankalpas. All the Gunas disappear. This is above the reach of mind and speech. Disembodied salvation (Videhamukti) is attained in the seventh stage.

Remaining in the certitude of Atma, without desires, and with an equal vision over all, having completely eradicated all complications of differentiations of 'I' or 'he', existence or non-existence, is Turiya.

### PRACTICAL HINTS

Purify the Chitta by doing Nishkama Karma for twelve years. The effect of Chitta Suddhi is the attainment of Viveka and Vairagya. Acquire the four qualifications (Sadhana Chatushtaya), — Viveka, Vairagya, Shad Sampat and Mumukshutva. Then approach a Guru. Have Sravana, Manana and Nididhyasana. Study carefully and constantly the twelve classical Upanishads and Yoga Vasishtha. Have a comprehensive and thorough understanding of the Lakshyārtha or indicative (real) meaning of the Maha-Vakya '*Tat Tvam Asi*'. Then, constantly reflect over this real meaning throughout the twenty-four hours. This is Brahma-Chintana or Brahma-Vichara. Do not allow any worldly thoughts to enter the mind. Vedāntic realisation comes not through mere reasoning but through constant Nididhyasana, like the analogy of Bhrāmarakita Nyaya (caterpillar and wasp). You get *Tadākara*, *Tadrūpa*, *Tanmaya*, *Tadiyāta*, *Talleenata* (Oneness, identity).

Generate the Brahmakara Vritti from your Sattvic Antahkarana through the influence of reflection on the real meaning of the Maha-Vakyas, '*Aham Brahma Asmi*' or '*Tat Tvam Asi*'. When you try to feel that you are infinity, this Brahmakara Vritti is produced. This Vritti destroys Avidya, induces Brahma Jnana and dies by itself eventually, like Nirmal seed which removes sediment in the water and itself settles down along with the mud and other dirty matter.

Retire into your meditation chamber. Sit on Padma, Siddha, Svastika or Sukha Asana to begin with. Relax the muscles. Close the eyes. Concentrate on or gaze at the Trikute, the space between the two eyebrows. Repeat 'Om' mentally with Brahma-Bhavana. This Bhavana is a *sine qua non*, very very important. Silence the conscious mind. Repeat mentally, feel constantly:

All-pervading ocean of	
Light I am	OM OM OM
Infinity I am	OM OM OM
All-pervading infinite	
Light I am	OM OM OM
Vyapaka Paripoorna Jyotir-	
maya Brahman I am	OM OM OM
Omnipotent I am	OM OM OM
Omniscient I am	OM OM OM
All Bliss I am	OM OM OM
Satchidananda I am	OM OM OM
All purity I am	OM OM OM
All glory I am	OM OM OM

All *Upadhis* (limiting adjuncts such as body, mind, etc.,) will be sublated. All Granthis (knots of the heart, viz., *Avidya*, *Kama* and *Karma*—ignorance, desire and action) will be cut asunder. The thin veil, *Avarana*, will be pierced. The *Pancha Kosha Adhyasa* (superimposition) will be removed. You will rest doubtless in Satchidananda state. You will get highest



Knowledge, highest Bliss, highest Realisation and highest end of life. '*Brahma Vit Brahmaiva Bhavati*'. You will become Sudha Satchidananda Vyapaka Paripoorna Brahman. '*Nasti Atra Samsayah*', there is no doubt of that.

There is no difficulty at all in Atma-Darshan, in Self-Realisation. You can have this within the twinkling of an eye as Raja Janaka had, before you can squeeze a flower with fingers, within the time taken for a grain to fall when rolled over a pot. You must do earnest, constant and intense prac-

tice. You are bound to succeed in two or three years.

Now-a-days there are plenty of 'Talking Brahman'. No flowery talk or verbosity can make a man Brahman. It is constant, intense, earnest Sadhana and Sadhana alone that can give a man direct Aparoksha Brahmic realisation (Svanubhava or Sakshatkara) wherein he sees Brahman just as he sees the solid white wall in front of him and feels Brahman, just as he feels the table behind him. Practise, practise, practise and become established in Brahman.

## Nada Yoga

Nada is sound. Brahman willed. There was a Sat-Sankalpa. A vibration or Spandana arose. There was vibration of Om. This is Nada.

The mind is fixed on Nada, or Anahata sounds are heard in the ear. It gets Laya or dissolution. The Yogi enters into Samadhi and attains Knowledge of the Self. This is Nada Yoga.

Nada Yoga is also called Laya Yoga. Kundalini Yoga is also called Laya Yoga.

Mind is naturally attracted by sweet sounds. It is entrapped by the sweet sounds, just as a deer is entrapped by sweet music.

Sit in Padmasana or Siddhasana or Sukhasana. Close the ears with the thumbs. This is Shanmukhi Mudra or Vaisnavi Mudra. Hear the Music of the Anahata sounds. Now you will have wonderful concentration.

Do Japa (Ajapa Japa) of Soham with breath or do Japa of any Mantra. Practise Pranayama for one or two months. You will hear the ten sounds (like that of Chini,

Chini-Chini, bell, conch, lute, cymbals, flute, drum, Mridanga and thunder) clearly and enjoy the music of the soul.

Abandon all worldly thoughts. Control your passions. Become indifferent to all objects. Practise Yama (self-restraint) or Sadachara (right conduct). Concentrate your attention on the Anahata sound which annihilates the mind. When the mind gets absorbed in the Anahata sound, you will attain knowledge of hidden things. You will hear Para-Vak. You will develop the eye of intuition. Eventually the mind is absorbed in Brahman or the Absolute.

Life is a ceaseless striving after non-ending unalloyed bliss, eternal, immortal, perennial Bliss. Scriptures, Sages and Saints have voiced it forth ever since the dawn of creation that Supreme Bliss can and should be had in one's own Self. Thus Self-realisation, Self-awareness or Self-Experience-Whole, Aparokshanubhuti is the *summum bonum* of human existence. That alone will bring to an end all your pains and miseries. But, how are we to attain that?

Atmachaitanya Samadhi or Aparoksha Jnana is possible only when the mind becomes pure and Sattvic. Purity of mind can be had only when the little 'I', egoism or Ahamkara, is curbed, annihilated. It means that I-ness and mine-ness have got to be abandoned. In turn, that involves purity and control of the Indriyas or senses. Unless the mind is cultured and controlled, the Indriyas cannot be controlled. Thus, in a circular way, we come again to the mind. Rightly did the Sages exclaim: *Mana eva manushyanam karanam bandha-mokshayoh*—Mind alone is the cause for men's release and bondage.

Prana and mind are interdependent in their functional abilities. As long as one remains uncontrolled, the other cannot be controlled. If one is under control, the other, too, comes under control of its own accord. It is not enough if they are simply controlled. As long as they are not annihilated, Vasanas will not leave you. Unless Vasanas are destroyed Chitta cannot be destroyed. The destruction of Chitta alone can lead you to Jnana.

There are two courses. Firstly, to bring the Prana under control through various arduous Yogic processes, and then to control the mind and withdraw it from external objects and fix it on the Self. Secondly, to annihilate the mind through effecting Mano-Laya by finding such a higher powerful principle towards which the mind will naturally run and into which it will merge itself thus entering into a state of Laya. The Sages found that Mano-Laya followed by Mano-Nasa was a safer means to attain Self-realisation than the arduous process of controlling the mind and culturing it which is always attended by the danger of the mind jumping into the old grooves of Vasanas at any moment.

In the course of further practical investigations the Sages and Seers found that *Sound* had the power to attract the mind and absorb it, so to say.

Thus Mano-Laya and Mano-Nasa through Nada Yoga (union or merger into Sound) was found to be an effective and safe means to Self-realisation.

## Lambika Yoga

Practice of Khechari Mudra is Lambika Yoga. The technique of the Mudra is explained below. He who practises this Mudra will have neither hunger nor thirst. He can walk in the sky. This Yoga is beset with difficulties.

This is a very difficult Yoga. It has to be learnt under a developed Yogi Guru who has practised this Yoga for a long time and attained full success.

It is kept secret by Yogis. It confers

great Siddhis or powers. It is a great help to control the mind.

He who has attained success in this Mudra, will have neither hunger nor thirst. He can control his Prana quite easily.

Khechari Mudra, Yoni Mudra or Shanmukhi Mudra, Sambhavi Mudra, Aswini Mudra, Maha Mudra and Yoga Mudra are the important Mudras. Among these Mudras, Khechari Mudra is the foremost. It is the king of the Mudras.



Mudra means a seal. It puts a seal to the mind and Prana. Mind and Prana come under the control of a Yogi.

Khechari Mudra consists of two important Kriyas, viz., Chedan and Dohan.

The lower part of the front portion of the tongue, the *frenum linguae* is cut to the extent of a hair's breadth with a sharp knife once in a week. Afterwards powder of turmeric is dusted over it. This is continued for some months. This is Chedan.

Afterwards the Yogic student applies butter to the tongue and lengthens it daily. He draws the tongue in such a way that it is similar to the process of milking the udder of a cow. This is Dohan.

When the tongue is sufficiently long (it should touch the tip of the nose), the

student folds it, takes it back and closes the posterior portion of the nostrils. Now he sits and meditates. The breath stops completely.

For some the cutting and the lengthening of the tongue is not necessary. They are born with a long tongue.

He who has attained perfection in this Mudra becomes a walker in the sky. Queen Chudalai had this Siddhi or power.

The Mudra helps the Yogi to get himself buried underneath the earth.

He who has purity and other divine virtues, who is free from desire, greed and lust, who is endowed with dispassion, discrimination and strong aspiration or longing for liberation will be benefited by the practice of this Mudra.

## Tantra Yoga

Salutations to the Divine Mother, who is Parabrahman of the Vedantins, Parama-Siva of Saiva Siddhantins, Maha-Vishnu of the Vaishnavites; who is the Father in Heaven of the Christians, Allah of the Mohammedans, Jehova of the Jews, Nirvana of Buddhists, Ahura Mazda of Zoroastrians, the Thing-in-Itself of occidental philosophers, the God Almighty of all religions.

The Sakti philosophy is as old as the Vedas. The Devi Sukta in the Rig Veda is a real source of the Sakti doctrine. The Devi is not only the principle of creation, the principle of cosmic energy, but is also the principle of Divine Knowledge. The glory of the Devi is most elaborately sung in the Sakta Agamas and Tantras and in the Devi Bhagavata also.

In the Sakti doctrine, Siva is the Supreme unchanging eternal consciousness and

Sakti is His kinetic power. Universe is Power. Universe is a manifestation of Devi's glory. This is the affirmation of the Sakti doctrine. Sakti being the power of God, Sakta is one who possesses Sakti.

Tantra Sadhana bestows tremendous Siddhis or powers. It should be learnt under a Siddha Tantric Guru. The Tantric student must be endowed with purity, faith, devotion, dedication to Guru, dispassion, humility, courage, cosmic love, truthfulness, non-covetousness and contentment. Absence of these qualities in the practitioner means a gross abuse of Saktism.

Saktism had been one of the potent powers for the spiritual regeneration of the Hindus. When practised by the ignorant, unenlightened and unqualified persons, it has led to certain abuses; and there is no denying that some degraded forms of Sakt-

ism have sought nothing but magic, immortality and occult powers.

The Sakti Tantra is Advaita Vada. It proclaims that Paramatman and Jivatman are one. The Saktas accept the Vedas as the basic scriptures. They recognise the Sakta-Tantras as Texts expounding the means to attain the goal set forth in the Vedas.

Tantra system is an integral part of Hinduism. Sakti system is one of the most important of Eastern systems. Tantra Sastra deserves a careful and deep study. The fundamental ideas of this system are in accordance with reason. The teachings of the Tantras are very correct. The Sakta Tantra is a Sadhana Sastra of Advaita Vedanta. It is indeed a deep and powerful system.

The Tantra texts are not books of sorcery or witchcraft, magic spell and mysterious formulae. They are wonderful scriptures. All persons without the distinction of caste, creed or colour, may draw inspiration and attain spiritual strength, wisdom

and eternal bliss. They are Sadhana Sastras. They show the path to liberation, perfection, freedom and immortal bliss.

The Tantra is in some of its aspects a secret doctrine. It is a *Gupta Vidya*. You cannot learn it from the study of books. You will have to get the knowledge and practice from the practical Tantriks, the Tantric Acharyas and Gurus who hold the key to it.

The word 'Sakti' comes from the root 'Sak' which means 'to be able', 'to do'. Sakti is symbolically female, but it is in reality neither male nor female, but only a force which manifests itself in various forms. Earth, water, fire, air, ether, electricity are Her gross forms—Apara Prakriti. Life-element is Her Para Prakriti. Mind is a modification of Chit Sakti.

Tantra Yoga lays special emphasis on the development of the powers latent in the six Chakras, from Muladhara to Ajna.

May Para Sakti or Devi, the Universal Mother Jagadamba bless you all with wisdom, peace and Immortal Bliss.

## Kundalini Yoga

### KUNDALINI AND CHAKRAS

Kundalini Sakti is the coiled-up, dormant, cosmic power that underlies all organic as well as inorganic matter. It is the primordial energy that lies at the basal Muladhara Chakra in a dormant, potential state. Kundalini Yoga is that Yoga which treats of Kundalini Sakti, the seven Chakras or centres of spiritual energy, the arousing of the sleeping Kundalini Sakti and its union with Lord Siva in Sahasrara Chakra at the crown of the head. The seven Chak-

ras are pierced by the passing of Kundalini Sakti to the top of the head.

The seven Chakras are: *Muladhara* (at the anus), *Svadhishthana* (at the root of the organ of generation), *Manipura* (at the navel), *Anahata* (in the heart), *Visuddha* (in the neck), *Ajna* (in the space between the two eye-brows) and *Sahasrara* (at the crown of the head).

*Nadis* are the astral tubes that carry Pranic currents (vital energy). They cannot be seen by naked eyes. They are not



the ordinary nerves, arteries and veins. There are 72000 Nadis. Among them three are important. They are *Ida*, *Pingala* and *Sushumna*. The *Sushumna* is the most important one, because *Kundalini* passes through this Nadi only. The first step in *Kundalini* Yoga is the purification of Nadis. When *Sushumna* is pure then only *Kundalini* will pass through it. Purification of Nadis is done by the practice of *Pranayama*.

The Yogi opens the mouth of *Sushumna* Nadi through *Pranayama*, *Bandhas* and *Mudras*, awakens the sleeping *Kundalini* and takes Her to *Sahasrara* at the crown of the head through the lower six *Chakras*. *Kundalini* sleeps in the *Muladhara* in  $3\frac{1}{2}$  coils. The three coils represent the three *Gunas* (*Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*) and the half coil represents the *Vikritis*.

*Kundalini* is awakened through *Pranayama*, *Asanas* and *Mudras* by *Hatha Yogins*; through concentration by *Raja Yogins*; through devotion and perfect self-surrender by *Bhaktas* or devotees; through analytical will by the *Jnanis*; by *Japa* of *Mantra* and by the grace of the *Guru*.

*Chakras* are in the *Linga Sarira* (astral body). *Linga Sarira* is of 17 *Tattvas*, viz., 5 *Jnanendriyas* (ears, skin, eyes, tongue and nose); 5 *Karmendriyas* (speech, hands, legs, genitals, anus); 5 *Pranas* (*Prana*, *Apana*, *Vyana*, *Udana*, *Samana*); *Manas* (mind); and *Buddhi* (intellect). These have corresponding centres in the spinal cord and the nerve-plexuses in the gross body. Each *Chakra* has control and function over a particular centre in the gross body. These cannot be seen by the naked eyes.

*Sukshma Prana* moves in the nervous system of the *Linga Sarira* (astral body). *Sthula Prana* moves in the nervous system of the gross physical body. The two courses

are intimately connected. They act and react upon each other. The *Chakras* are in the astral body even after the disintegration of the physical organism at death.

Wherever there is an interlacing of several nerves, arteries and veins, that centre is called *Plexus*. Similarly there are plexuses or centres of *Sukshma Prana* in *Sushumna* Nadi. All the functions of the body, nervous, digestive, circulatory, respiratory, genito-urinary and all other systems of the body are under the control of these centres in *Sushumna*. These are subtle centres of vital energy. These are the centres of consciousness (*Chaitanya*). These subtle centres of *Sushumna* have their corresponding centres in the physical body. For example, *Anahata Chakra* which is in the *Sushumna* Nadi has its corresponding centre in the physical body at the heart (*Cardiac Plexus*).

The subtle centres in the *Sushumna* Nadi are otherwise known as *Lotuses* or *Chakras*. A particular *Tattva* preponderates at every *Chakra*. There is a presiding deity in each *Chakra*. In every *Chakra* a certain animal is represented. It denotes that the centre has the qualities, *Tattvas* or *Gunas* of that particular animal. There are six important *Chakras*—*Muladhara*, *Svadhishthana*, *Manipura*, *Anahata*, *Visuddha* and *Ajna*. *Sahasrara* is the chief *Chakra*. It is in the head. These seven *Chakras* correspond to the seven *Lokas* (*Bhuh*, *Bhuvah*, *Svah*, *Mahah*, *Jana*, *Tapah* and *Satya Lokas*). *Muladhara* to *Visuddha* are the centres of *Pancha Bhutas* (five elements)—earth, water, fire, air and ether. *Ajna* is the seat of the mind.

When *Kundalini* is awakened it passes on from *Muladhara* to *Sahasrara* through all the *Chakras*. At every centre to which the Yogi directs the *Kundalini*, he experi-

ences a special form of Ananda (Bliss) and gains special Siddhis (psychic powers) and knowledge. He enjoys the Supreme Bliss when Kundalini is taken to Sahasrara Chakra.

### PETALS ON CHAKRAS

Each Chakra has a particular number of petals with a Sanskrit alphabet on each petal. The vibration that is produced at each petal is represented by the corresponding Sanskrit letter. Every letter denotes the Mantra of Devi Kundalini. The letters exist in the petals in a latent form. These can be manifested and the vibrations of the Nadis felt during concentration.

The number of petals on the lotuses varies. Muladhara, Svadhishtana, Manipura, Anahata, Visuddha and Ajna Chakras have 4, 6, 10, 12, 16 and 2 petals, respectively. All the 50 Sanskrit letters are on the 50 petals. The number of petals in each Chakra is determined by the number and position of the Yoga Nadis around the Chakra. I will make it still clearer. From each Chakra a particular number of Yoga Nadis crop up. The Chakra gives the appearance of a lotus with the Nadis as its petals. The sound produced by the vibrations of the Yoga Nadis is represented by the corresponding Sanskrit letter. The Chakras with their petals hang downwards when Kundalini is at the Muladhara Chakra. When it is awakened, they turn towards Brahmarandhra. They always face the side of Kundalini.

### MOVEMENT OF KUNDALINI

The Kundalini current rises through the spine and sometimes crawls like an ant. Sometimes, when the Yogi is pure, it jumps like a monkey and reaches the Sahasrara. Sometimes it rises like a bird that hops

from one branch to another. Sometimes the spiritual current rises up like a snake and moves in a zig-zag manner. Sometimes the Yogi swims happily like a fish in the ocean of divine bliss.

The Yogic practitioner will get help from within when he moves from Chakra to Chakra. A mysterious power, a mysterious voice, will guide him at every step. He should have perfect, unshakable faith in the Divine Mother. It is She who guides the Sadhaka. It is She who takes Her child from Chakra to Chakra. She invisibly renders him all assistance. Without Her grace, you cannot move an inch in your ascent in the Sushumna.

If you are pure and free from all desires, Kundalini will awaken by itself and you will be benefited. If you awaken Kundalini by violent methods, forcibly, when your heart is impure and when desires lurk in your mind, you will come across temptations of various sorts, when you move from plane to plane; you will have a downfall. You will have no strength of will to resist these temptations.

That aspirant who has firm faith in Yogic Sastras, who is courageous, devotional, humble, generous, merciful, pure and dispassionate, can easily awaken Kundalini and attain success in Samadhi. He should also be equipped with right conduct and self-restraint; he should constantly engage himself in the service of his Guru and be free from lust, anger, Moha, greed and vanity.

When Kundalini is taken to the Sahasrara, when She is united with Lord Siva, perfect Samadhi (superconscious blissful state) ensues. The Yogi drinks the nectar of immortality.



# Yoga of Synthesis

Yoga of synthesis is suitable for the vast majority of persons. It is a unique Yoga.

Man is a strange, complex mixture of will, feeling and thought. He is a triune being. He is like a tricycle or a three-wheeled chariot. He wills to possess the objects of his desires. He has emotion; and so he feels. He has reason and so he thinks and ratiocinates. In some the emotional element may preponderate, while in some others the rational element may dominate. Just as will, feeling and thought are not distinct and separate, so also, work, devotion and knowledge are not exclusive of one another. He must, therefore, develop his heart, intellect and hand. Then alone can he attain perfection. Many aspirants have lop-sided development. They do not possess an integral development, as they neglect one or the other of these aspects of their personality.

One-sided development is not commendable. Religion and Yoga must educate and develop the whole man—his heart, intellect and hand. Then only he will have integral development.

In the mind, there are three defects, viz., *Mala* or impurity, *Vikshepa* or tossing, and *Avarana* or veil. The impurities of the mind should be removed by the practice of Karma Yoga, by selfless service. The tossing should be removed by worship or *Upasana*, by Japa and devotion. The veil should be torn down by the practice of Jnana Yoga, i.e., by study of Vedantic literature, enquiry, self-analysis, service to the Guru, and deep meditation. Only then Self-realisation is possible.

If you want to see your face clearly

in a mirror, you must remove the dirt in the mirror, keep it steady, and remove the covering also. You can see your face clearly in the bottom of a lake only if the turbidity is removed, if the water that is agitated by the wind is rendered still, and if the moss that is lying on the surface is removed. Even so is the case with Self-realisation.

Action, emotion and intelligence are the three horses that are linked to this body-chariot. They should work in perfect harmony or unison. Then only the chariot will run smoothly. There must be integral development. You must have the head of Sankara, the heart of Buddha, and the hand of Janaka.

The Yoga of Synthesis alone will bring about an integral development. The Yoga of Synthesis alone will develop the head, heart and hand, and lead one to perfection. To become harmoniously balanced in all directions is the ideal of religion and of Yoga. This can be achieved by the practice of the Yoga of Synthesis.

To behold the one Self in all beings is *Jnana*, wisdom; to love the Self is *Bhakti*, devotion; to serve the Self is *Karma*, action. When the Jnana Yogi attains wisdom, he is endowed with devotion and selfless activity. Karma Yoga is for him a spontaneous expression of his spiritual nature, as he sees the one Self in all. When the devotee attains perfection in devotion, he is possessed of wisdom and activity. For him also, Karma Yoga is a spontaneous expression of his divine nature, as he beholds the one Lord everywhere. The Karma Yogi attains wisdom and devotion when his actions are wholly selfless. The





**SECTION V**  
**Sivananda's**  
**Advice**  
**and**  
**Message**

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# Advice To Children

God created you, your brother, sister, father, mother, friend and your relatives. He created the sun, moon and the stars. He created the animals and the birds. He created the mountains, rivers and trees. He created the whole world.

He dwells in your heart. He is everywhere. He is all-pervading. He is all-knowing. He is all-powerful. He is all-merciful. He is all-loving. He is all-blissful. Your body is the moving temple of God. Keep the body pure, strong and healthy.

God is Love. God is Truth. God is Peace. God is Bliss. God is Light. God is Power. God is Knowledge. Realise Him and be free.

Do Kirtan daily morning and night. Pray daily. Offer flowers to Him. Prostrate before Him. Offer sweetmeats to Him and then eat. Place light before Him. Burn camphor before Him. Do Arati. Put garland on Him. Pray to Him daily. He will give you everything.

Keep a picture of God in your room. Worship Him daily. All your desires will be fulfilled.

Offer this morning prayer to God, everyday:

"O Lord of this world! Prostrations unto Thee! Thou art my Guru, real Mother, real Friend and real Guide. Protect me. I am Thine. All is Thine. Thy Will be done."

"O Adorable God! Salutations unto Thee. Give me pure intellect. Make me pure. Give me light, strength, health and long life. Make me a good Brahmachari."

"O Almighty Lord! Remove all my evil qualities. Make me virtuous. Make

me a patriot. Let me love my mother-country."

Before you retire to bed at night, offer this prayer to God:

"O Sweet God! Forgive my sins and wrong actions. I thank You for all Your gifts. You are very kind to me. Let me remember You always."

"Make me dutiful. Give me success in my examination. Make me a good, brilliant boy. (Make me a good, brilliant girl.) Adorations unto Thee."

"Give me good memory. Let me love all. Let me serve all. Let me see You in all. Make me prosperous. Protect me, my father, mother, grandfather, grandmother, brothers and sisters. Glory unto Thee!"

Dear Govinda! Do not fight with your brother, sister or classmates. Obey your parents and teachers. Do not smoke. This is a bad habit. You will get disease from smoking. Give up bad company.

Do not use vulgar words. Do not abuse anybody. Be kind to all. Serve all. Love all. Respect elders. Do not steal anything. Do not hurt anybody. Speak gently. Speak sweetly. Be punctual in your school.

Study your daily lessons well. Stand first in the class. Do not play much. Do not kill bugs and scorpions. Do not waste time.

Don't play cards. Playing cards will make you a wicked boy. Do not go to cinema. But do go to the temple daily and worship the Lord. Take flowers, camphor and fruits when you go to the temple.

Don't hate anybody, but do love all. Give a pie to a blind man. Wash the clothes of your parents. Never become angry to-

wards your parents and others. Anger is very bad. It will spoil your health. You will spoil your name. You will do wrong actions if you become angry.

God watches your thoughts. Don't hide your thoughts. Be frank. Be pure in your thoughts, words and actions.

Worship Lord Surya, the Sun-God, on Sundays. Repeat '*Om Mitraya Namah*', '*Om Suryaya Namah*', '*Om Adityaya Namah*'. Lord Surya will give you good health and vigour and good eyesight.

Worship Lord Siva on Mondays. Worship Devi on Tuesdays and Fridays. Worship Guru on Thursdays. Worship Hanuman on Saturdays. You will get plenty, peace, prosperity and success!

Lord Brahma is the creator of this world. Sarasvati, Goddess of learning, is His Sakti or energy or wife. Lord Vishnu is the preserver of this world. Goddess Lakshmi is His Sakti, energy or wife. She is the Goddess of wealth. Lord Siva is the destroyer of this world. Uma or Parvati is His Sakti, energy or wife. Lord Ganesa is His eldest son. Lord Subrahmanya is His second son!

Lord Ganesa removes all obstacles. Lord Subrahmanya gives all success and strength. Worship them with faith and devotion. You will get *Bhakti* (devotion), *Bhukti* (happiness) and *Mukti* (liberation).

God loves you. He gives you many good things. He gives you food to eat and clothes to wear. He has given you ears to hear, eyes to see, a nose to smell, tongue to taste, hands to feel and work, and legs to walk.

You cannot see God with your fleshy eyes but He sees you. He takes care of you. He knows all that you do.

He is very kind to you. Love Him. Praise Him. Sing His Name and glory.

Pray to Him to keep you away from all sins. He will be pleased with you. He will bless you.

O David! Look at the rose! How beautiful it is! What a fine fragrance it has. You love it. You pluck it and smell it. Can a scientist produce a rose? You can make a paper-flower which may look beautiful but it has no sweet smell.

The rose soon fades and loses its beauty and fragrance. You throw it away. It is perishable. Its beauty lasts for a few minutes. Who has created the beautiful flower? This Creator is God. He is Beauty of beauties. He is everlasting Beauty. Attain Him. You also will possess eternal beauty. Beauty is God. Always discriminate between the real and the unreal.

There is only one God. But His names and aspects are endless. Call Him by any name and worship Him in any aspect that pleases you. You are sure to see Him and get His grace and blessings.

Brahma, Vishnu and Siva are the three Forms of the one God of the Hindus. Allah is the God of Muslims. Jehovah is the God of the Jews. The Father in Heaven is the God of Christians. Ahura Mazda is the God of the Zoroastrians.

God is the Aim of all religions. Every religion points out the way to attain God. God is the central topic of every religion.

Do not fight with your Christian friends. Do not fight with your Muslim friends or Parsee friends. Their religions also lead them to God just as your religion does. You can reach the same destination by travelling through any of the paths leading to it. "All paths lead to God." Bear this in mind.

Purity, charity, control of the senses, penance, truthfulness, absence of hatred and pride will help you to attain God.



## Advice To Brahmacharis

Brahmacharya means celibacy. A Brahmachari is one who is a celibate, one who observes chastity or celibacy. The term 'Celibacy' is from the Latin word 'Caelebs', which means 'unmarried' or 'single' and signifies the state of living unmarried. It means control of not only the reproductive Indriya but also control of all senses; it means purity in thought, word and actions.

The life of a Brahmachari begins with the *Upanayana* ceremony, the investiture of the sacred thread, his second birth. The Brahmachari should direct his entire attention solely to study and acquiring of such knowledge as would enable him to become a worthy member of society. During this period of study let him live either with his parents or at the place of his study under the supervision of teachers. He should not live by himself, with friends and acquaintances, nor with relatives.

A Brahmachari is one who is attempting to realise Brahman by his conducting a life of absolute celibacy. Brahmacharya is the conduct of leading a celibate life. A Brahmachari should study religious books till he reaches the age of twenty-five. If he has taken the vow of celibacy till the end of life, if he wants to become a Naish-tika Brahmachari, he need not enter the stage of householder. He should have real lasting Vairagya and Viveka. Then only he will be really benefited. He can devote his whole life to spiritual pursuits.

A Brahmachari should worship his Guru, worship cows and gods with due reverence. Guru is the embodiment of all Vedas and all Devas. Therefore God and Guru should be taken as one and he should

worship his Guru daily. He should serve his Guru with faith and devotion for complete twelve years.

The Brahmachari should have Japa as his highest possession. He should never leave Japa. Through Japa alone the Brahmachari attains success, no matter whether he performs any other Vedic sacrifice or not. Through the contact of his senses with their objects of gratification, he undoubtedly acquires sin. Hence, by controlling them, he achieves success. Control of the senses is possible for the Brahmachari only through Japa.

Brahmacharis should do their *Sandhya Vandana* daily at the proper time,—morning, noon and evening. 'Sandhya' is the point of junction of two periods of time. There is a special manifestation of force or purity at Sandhyas. The student will derive immense benefit by doing prayers at this particular meeting point of two periods of time. *Arghya* with repetition of the Gayatri should be given to the sun at the proper time. You will have wonderful health, vigour and vitality and a pure, sharp intellect. At the present moment students have entirely neglected their Sandhyas. Their minds have been charged with materialistic poison. They have become slayers of Atman. "Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we may die" has become their philosophy! Poor, self-deluded souls! How long will you continue this state of affairs? Do not kill the soul within. Awake, arise and purify yourself. Do Sandhya. Understand and realise its potency and efficacy. Do some form of worship or other and realise the splendours of the Atman. Regain your lost divinity.

A true Brahmachari only can cultivate

Bhakti. A true **Brahmachari** alone can practise Yoga. A true **Brahmachari** only can acquire Jnana. Without **Brahmacharya** no spiritual progress or success in worldly affairs is possible.

**Brahmacharis** should entirely give up betel-chewing, cigarettes, tobacco, snuff, tea, coffee, etc. Tobacco produces nicotine poisoning, tobacco-heart (irritable heart), nervous diseases and tobacco-amblyopia (eye disease).

O bold **Brahmachari**, practice of **Brahmacharya** gives good health, inner peace, strength, peace of mind and long life. It invigorates the mind and nerves. It helps to conserve physical and mental energy. It augments strength, vigour and vitality. It gives power to face the difficulties in the daily battle of life. It is the master key for opening the realm of health and happiness. It is the corner stone of bliss and unalloyed felicity. It is the only specific that keeps up true manliness. Therefore keep up **Brahmacharya** by all means. **Brahmacharya** is freedom from sexual thoughts and desires. Preserve the vital fluid. It is the life-force in you. You will enjoy supreme bliss. A perfect **Brahmachari** can move the world, can command the five elements, like Sant Jnana Deva.

**Brahmacharya** is the basis for acquiring immortality. **Brahmacharya** brings material progress and psychic advancement. It is the substratum for a life of peace in the Atman. It is a potent weapon for waging war against the internal Asuras, viz., *Kama*, *Krodha*, *Lobha*, etc. It contributes perennial joy, uninterrupted and undecaying bliss. It gives tremendous energy, clear brain, gigantic will-power, bold understanding, retentive memory and good Vichara Sakti. Through **Brahmacharya** and **Brah-**

**macharya** alone you can get physical, mental and spiritual advancement in life.

The vital energy, the *Virya*, supports your life. It is the Prana of Pranas which shines in your sparkling eyes, which beams in your blooming cheeks. It is a great treasure for you. It is the quintessence of blood. One drop of semen is manufactured out of forty drops of blood. Mark here how valuable this fluid is!

**Brahmacharya** or spotless chastity is the best of all panaceas. One who has perfect control over the sexual energy attains powers unobtainable by any other means. The door to Nirvana or perfection is complete **Brahmacharya**. Complete celibacy is the master-key to open the realms of elysian bliss. The avenue to the abode of supreme peace begins from **Brahmacharya** or purity. *Ojas* is spiritual energy that is stored up in the brain. By sublime thoughts, meditation, Japa, worship and *Pranayama*, sexual energy can be transmuted into *Ojas Sakti* and stored up in the brain. This energy can be utilised for divine contemplation and spiritual pursuits.

That man in whom the sex-idea is deep-rooted can never dream of understanding Vedanta and realising Brahman even in one hundred crores of births. Sexual *Vasanas* (subtle desires) are more powerful than other *Vasanas*. Therefore you will have to direct all your efforts to subduing the sexual *Vasanas*. Narada says in his *Bhakti Sutras*: "These (sexual) propensities, though they at first are like ripples, acquire the proportions of a sea, on account of bad company." (*Sutra* 45). Therefore avoid evil company at all costs.

What is the state of your mind, when you attend a ball-room dance or nautch party, or when you read the 'Mysteries of the Court of London'? What is the



state of your mind when you attend the Satsanga party of a realised sage at Banarès on the banks of the Ganga, or when you study the soul-elevating classical Upanishads? Compare and contrast your mental states. Remember, friend, that there is nothing so utterly ruinous to the soul as evil company. One should not talk even of stories of women, the luxurious ways of rich persons, rich foods, vehicles, politics, silken clothing, flowers, scents, etc. Because the mind gets easily excited; it will begin to imitate the ways of luxurious persons. Desires will crop up. Attachment also will come in.

Obscene pictures, vulgar words, novels which deal with love stories, excite passion and produce ignoble, mean, undesirable sentiments in the heart. Whereas, the sight of a good picture of Lord Krishna or Lord Rama or Lord Jesus or Lord Buddha and the hearing of the sublime songs of Suradas, Tulasidas or Tyagaraja induce noble sentiments, holy thrill in the heart and produce tears of joy and Prem, and elevate the mind to Bhava Samadhi instantaneously. Do you see clearly the difference now?

He who has wasted the vital energy becomes easily irritable, loses his balance of mind and gets into a state of explosive fury for trifling things. When a man becomes furious, he behaves improperly. He will do anything he likes. He will even insult his parents, Guru and respectable persons. He does not know what he is exactly doing, as he loses his power of reasoning and discrimination. It behoves, therefore, that an aspirant who tries to

develop good behaviour must preserve the vital energy. Preservation of this divine energy leads to attainment of strong will-power, good behaviour, spiritual exaltation and *Sreya* or *Moksha* eventually.

There is no harm in looking at a beautiful woman. You can admire her beauty and think that the beauty in her face is the beauty of the Lord. Beauty is God. Woman brings the message that God is Beauty of beauties. Woman is the symbol of beauty. There should not be any lustful look (*Drishti Dosha*). The angle of vision must be changed as indicated above.

Again and again think that the beauty of the face is the beauty of the Lord. Godly feeling will arise when you look at a woman or a beautiful picture. Study the tenth chapter of the Gita—Vibhuti Yoga, again and again.

Physical Brahmacharya must be strictly practised at first. Control the body. Mental purity or mental Brahmacharya will gradually manifest.

Lead a well regulated moral life. Moral strength is the backbone of spiritual progress. Ethical culture is part and parcel of spiritual Sadhana. Loss of this vital energy is tantamount to practical death. Heavy loss of the vital energy is the cause of desire, miseries and premature death. Therefore take particular care to preserve this vital energy. Keep up Brahmacharya or the vow of celibacy. By the observance of Brahmacharya many of the sages of yore have attained Immortality. It is the source of new strength, vigour, vitality and success in life and eternal happiness hereafter.

*Sivananda on 'Peace'—14*

Everlasting Peace can be found only within your own Atman or Self, or God.

## Advice To Householders

The Ashramas or stages of life are four, viz., *Brahmacharya*, the stage of student life; *Grihastha*, the stage of householder life; *Vanaprastha*, the stage of seclusion (forest-living); and *Sannyasa*, the stage of total renunciation. Each order of life has its own duties. In none of these stages must a man grasp at the special duties of the other three. At the present moment, it is difficult to maintain or observe the exact details of the ancient rules, as the conditions have changed very much. But, if we can have a clear idea of the fundamental duties of each, we shall still be able to shape the life through a regulated course of development and steady growth.

The student, after finishing his studies, enters the order of *Grihastha*, when he is ready to take up the duties and responsibilities of household life. Of all Ashramas, that of the householder is the highest as he verily supports the other three. As all the streams and rivers flow to rest in the ocean, even so all the Ashramas flow to rest in the householder. This household life is the field for developing various virtues such as mercy, love, generosity, patience, tolerance, purity, prudence, right judgment, etc. It is highly lamentable to note that the grandeur, solemnity and dignity of this stage of life is not fully realised these days.

A householder has duties to do towards the society, his neighbours, country, friends, relations, wife, children and parents. He must serve religious or social institutions for some hours daily in a disinterested manner with the spirit of Karma Yoga. This will purify his heart and prepare the *Antahkarana* for the descent of divine light.

He must treat his neighbours as his own self. He should share what he has,—material, mental and spiritual—with others.

He must give good education to his sons and daughters and treat his wife well as she is his partner in life and religious performances (*Ardhangini*). Parents are veritable gods on earth. Therefore he should serve them nicely, and carry out their behests to their entire satisfaction. He should perform *Sraddha* (annual rites to the departed souls) every year and offer *Tarpana* to his *Pitrus* or ancestors.

Every householder should perform the following Yajnas. The fire place, the water pot, the cutting, grinding and sweeping apparatuses are the five places where injury to life is committed, daily. The sins committed here are said to be washed away by the five Maha Yajnas which every Dwija (householder) ought to perform and which are intended to satisfy the Bhutas, the Rishis, the men, the gods and the Pitrus. The five great Yajnas (*Pancha Maha Yajnas*) are: (1) *Deva Yajna*: This consists of offering oblations unto Devatas or gods with recitation of Vedic Mantras; (2) *Rishi Yajna*: This consists of study of Vedas and teaching of Vedas to students and offering of oblations to Rishis; (3) *Pitru Yajna*: It consists of *Tarpana* or oblations to departed souls and *Sraddha* or annual religious rites performed for departed souls; (4) *Bhuta Yajna*: This is distribution of food to cows, crows and animals. This develops cosmic love and an Advaitic feeling of oneness; and (5) *Atithi Yajna*: This consists of giving food to guests and honouring them.

The Pitrus are forefathers who dwell in *Pitru-loka*. They possess clairvoyance



and clairaudience. Recitation of Mantras exercises tremendous influence through their vibration. The Pitrus hear the sounds through the power of clairaudience and they are pleased. They bless those who offer the oblation. In Sraddha, the essence of food offerings is taken up by sun's rays to Suryaloka and the departed souls are pleased with the offerings. Even in the West many persons perform Tarpana and Sraddha. They have scientifically investigated into the beneficial effects of such oblations. It is the imperative duty of all householders to perform Sraddha and Tarpana to please the Rishis and the Pitrus. It is only the deluded souls with perverted intellects who misconstrue things and neglect to perform the sacred ceremonies and consequently suffer.

The worldly duties are not ties. The world is the best teacher. You are not required to renounce the world and take shelter in the Himalayan caves to claim back your lost divinity. The world cannot stand in the way of your God-realisation. Live in the world but allow not the world to live in you. He who living in the midst of temptations of the world attains perfection is the true hero.

A householder should earn money by honest means and distribute it in the proper manner. He should spend one-tenth of his income in charity. He should enjoy sensual pleasures within the limits of the moral law.

Householders have got a very responsible duty in training their children. If they want to shirk this responsibility, they ought to have checked their itching sensation caused by lust, and should have stopped procreation by becoming Naishthika Brahmacharis. Serious punishment is awaiting them in the other world if they leave

their children untrained in this world. They themselves should lead an ideal life. Then alone their children can copy them. If they have wrong evil habits, their children will also try to imitate them. Children have got the power of imitation.

Parents should watch the habits and ways of their children, and take care not to allow them to join evil company. If they speak lies, they should be punished. They should not be allowed to utter any slang or obscene words. They should not be allowed to smoke and chew betels. They should not be allowed to go to cinemas and read novels.

Parents should give them Sanskrit education. The study of Sanskrit is very essential. Even girls should be made to study Sanskrit. They should be able to understand the Gita.

Father and mother are only responsible for the character of their children. If the parents are irreligious, their children also become irreligious. It is the onerous duty of the parents to give their children religious training in their boyhood. They should themselves lead the divine life. When religious Samskaras are lodged in boyhood, they will strike deep root, blossom and bear fruit when they attain manhood.

The present-day parents, who are slaves of fashion, teach their children to put on collar and open-coat and to treat with contempt those who wear simple clothing. They teach their children fashion instead of sublime mottoes such as 'plain living and high thinking'.

When the householder sees that his sons are able to bear the burden of his duties, when his grandsons are around him, the time has come for his wife and himself to retire from the world and spend their time in study and meditation.

Great Rishis of yore were married, but they did not lead the life of passion and lust. Their life of Grihasthasrama was a life of Dharma only. If it is not possible for you to emulate them to the very letter, you will have to keep their lives before you as landmarks, as the ideal for emulating, and you must tread the path of Truth. Grihasthasrama is not a life of lust and loose living. It is a strict life of selfless service, of Dharma pure and simple, of charity, goodness, kindness, self-help, and all that is good and all that is helpful to humanity. If you can live such a life, the life of a Grihastha is as good as the life of a Sannyasin.

Married life, if lived in a perfect ideal manner, is no bar to the attainment of Mukti. A good woman is to man what banks are to the river. She is the rhythm which leads him to Truth. Her love is God's grace.

At night, all the members of the house should sit in a circle and do Kirtan for an hour before the picture of their respective Deities. The servants of the house also should be included. In the evening, some four people can join together and read the Bhagavata, the Ramayana, etc. This will give peace of mind and strengthen the spiritual Samskaras. This will fill the mind with purity and divine thoughts.

That house is really Vaikuntha where the husband and wife lead an ideal divine life, singing the Lord's Name, repeating His Mantra, studying the Ramayana, Bhagavata, controlling the Indriyas and serving Bhaktas and Sannyasins. Householders should daily read in the early morning hours, after a cold bath, some chapters in the Gita, Ramayana, Bhagavata, Upanishads and Yoga Vasishtha, Vishnu Sahasra-

nama, Lalita Sahasranama, Aditya Hridayam, etc.

Constant repetition of the Names of the Lord (Japa, Smaran) is an easy means of crossing the ocean of mortal Samsara or earthly existence. This is more suitable for the householders.

It is quite possible for a man to practise celibacy while remaining in the world, albeit there are various sorts of temptations and distractions. Many have achieved this in times of yore. There are many even at the present moment also. A well-disciplined life, study of religious scriptures, Satsanga, Japa, Dhyana, Pranayama, Satvic and moderate food, daily introspection and enquiry, self-analysis and self-correction, Sadachara, practice of Yama, Niyama, physical, verbal and mental Tapas in accordance with the teachings of the Gita will go a long way in the attainment of this end.

Nectar's sons! Shake off all weaknesses. Stand up. Gird up the loins. Do your Svadharma satisfactorily in accordance with your caste or stage of life. Evolve quickly in spirituality. Eternal Bliss, Supreme Peace, Infinite Knowledge can be had only in God. Practice of Svadharma will surely lead to the attainment of God-consciousness. There is no happiness in finite objects. The Infinite alone is Bliss. Understand the truth through the practice of Svadharma. This world is unreal. It is like a mirage. Senses and mind are deceiving you every moment. Wake up. Open your eyes. Learn to discriminate. Do not trust your Indriyas. They are your enemies. It is very difficult to get a human birth. Life is short. Time is fleeting. Those who cling to unreal things of this world are verily committing suicide. Struggle hard to practise your Svadharma. Keep the ideal be-



fore your eyes always. Have a programme of life. Attempt to realise the ideal. Stick to your daily spiritual practices with leech-

like tenacity. Practise it and realise Sat-chit-ananda state right now in this very birth.

## Advice To Vanaprasthas

If you have finished the period of householder's life, if your sons are all well-fixed up in life, you must prepare yourself for the next stage of life, viz., *Vanaprastha*—dwelling in the forest. What is the use of repeating again and again the same process of eating, drinking, talking, dressing, etc.? You must achieve the *summum bonum* of existence. You must attain freedom or perfection. It is very difficult to get a human birth. This life is meant for Self-realisation. What is the difference between a man and beast if man continues the sensual life till his life ends? God has given man powers of discrimination, reflection and Vicharasakti. He must utilise these powers for attaining God-consciousness.

After retiring from service, as a preparation for a life of *Vanaprastha*, you should live for one or two months in Prayaga (Allahabad) or Rishikesh or in a solitary place on the banks of the Narmada or the Ganga or Yamuna where you can get *Satsanga* of Mahatmas. Then only you can destroy Moha or attachment for your home and children. Then only you can have good concentration and solid spiritual practice. After two months you can return to your home. Live now in a solitary place that is situated a mile away from your house. Construct a small Kutir. Ask your people to send meals to your place. Sometimes you can take your food in your house. Then again come back to the banks of the Ganga. By so doing your family people

will be used to separation. They will not get any shock. You also will get sufficient experience of a secluded life in spiritual practices. Eventually you can stay in seclusion for any number of years without any difficulty. Do not write letters to anybody when you are in seclusion. Spend your pension in charity. Plunge yourself in Japa, meditation, Svadhyaya, Kirtan and Pranayama. Draw a daily routine and stick to it tenaciously. You will derive wonderful spiritual benefits.

After some years, you can lead a life of total *Vanaprastha*. If your wife cannot lead a life of *Vanaprastha*, if she is much attached to the children, you alone can lead the life of a *Vanaprastha*. Remain in a solitary place which has a temperate climate and devote your time in study and meditation. If you have a tendency to serve the society, you can work for two or three hours with the spirit of Nishkamya Karma Yoga, without the idea of agency and without expectation of fruits. This will purify your heart quickly and prepare you for the descent of divine light.

He who has taken to the life of total *Vanaprastha* should not go again to his native place and live with his son. The subtle form of Moha and attachment will soon develop. Maya's ways are very mysterious. It is Moha that brings a man again and again to the *Mrityu-loka*, world of death. Moha is the strong weapon of Maya. The joy and sorrow of your family people will

disturb your peace of mind. That is the reason why it is said in the Sastras that a Vanaprastha or a Sannyasin should not visit his native place or native district or province for a period of twelve years.

The strict scriptural ideal of the Vanaprastha may not be quite possible to follow to the very letter at the present day. Man has not the same robustness of health and hardihood, the same endurance, strength of frame and iron constitution as the ancestors. If a purely jungle-life in complete seclusion is not possible, retire to a quiet village or a place of pilgrimage or a holy Tirtha. Live there upon a simple diet of plain bread and vegetable or even milk and fruit. Be extremely simple in your habits. Reduce your wants to the minimum, be devoid of luxury, and observe austerity in food, sleep, dress and all habits as much as possible. The highest ideal must be always in your mind, and within the capacity of

your prowess you should strive to adhere rigidly to the true ideal.

If you find it difficult to lead the life of seclusion, remain in a solitary room in your own house or put up a thatched hut in the corner of the compound. If you can conveniently manage, live in a separate house and have a cook, or ask your people to send the food to your room. Do not mix much with family members. Have your interview time for an hour, say between 4 and 5 p.m. During the interview period talk on spiritual subjects only. Conduct Kirtan and Gita or Upanishadic class.

O aged man! What is the use of getting a human body if you do not utilise even the last portion of your life in divine contemplation, Bhajan or worship? It is very difficult to get a human birth. Wake up from your slumber of deep ignorance. Start spiritual practice at once. Realise the Self and be free in this birth!

## Advice To Sannyasins

Every religion has a band of anchorites who lead the life of seclusion and meditation. There are Bikshus in Buddhism, Fakirs in Mohammedanism, Sufistic Fakirs in Sufism, Fathers and Reverends in Christianity. The glory of a religion will be absolutely lost if you remove these hermits or Sannyasins or those who lead a life of renunciation and divine contemplation. It is these people who maintain the religions of the world. It is these people who give solace to householders when they are in trouble and distress. They are the harbingers of divine wisdom and peace. They are the messengers of Atmic knowledge and heavenly messages. They are the dissemi-

nators of Adhyatmic science and Upanishadic revelations. They heal the sick, comfort the forlorn, nurse the bed-ridden. They bring hope to the hopeless, joy to the depressed, strength to the weak, courage to the timid by imparting the knowledge of Vedanta and the significance of the 'Tat Tvam Asi' Mahavakya.

A real Sannyasin is the only mighty potentate on this earth. He never takes anything. He always gives. It was Sannyasins only who did glorious, sublime work in the past. It is Sannyasins only who can work wonders in the present and in the future also. Sri Sankara's name can never be obliterated so long as the world



lasts. It was Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Swami Vivekananda, Swami Dayananda, and Swami Rama Tirtha who disseminated the sublime teachings of the scriptures and preserved Hindu religion. A Sannyasin alone can do real *Lokasangraha*, because he has divine knowledge, he is a whole-timed man. One real Sannyasin can change the destiny of the whole world. It was one mighty Sankara who established the doctrine of Kevala Advaita philosophy. He still lives in our hearts.

Just as there are research scholars or post-graduate students in Science, Psychology, Biology, Philosophy, etc., so also there should be post-graduate Yogins and Sannyasins who will devote their time in study and meditation, in research over the Atman. These post-graduate Yogins will give to the world their experiences and realisations in the field of religion and spirituality. They will train students and send them into the world for preaching. It is the duty of householders, zamindars and the administration of the nation to look after the wants of these Sannyasins. These Sannyasins will take care of their souls and in turn they will have to take care of their bodies. Thus the wheel of the world will revolve smoothly. There will be peace in the land.

Sannyasins should, on their part, be rooted in Advaitic Consciousness. Mere study of Vichara Sagar or Panchadasi cannot bring in the experience of pure, Advaitic Consciousness. Vedantic gossiping and idle, dry talk on Brahma Sutras and Upanishads cannot help one in feeling the unity or oneness of life. There is no hope for him to feel the Advaitic unity of consciousness—'*Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma*'—'all indeed is Brahman', unless the aspirant destroys ruthlessly all sorts of Ghrina, hatred, petty-mindedness, jealousy, envy, ideas of

superiority, and all barriers that separate man from man, by incessant, protracted service of humanity with the right mental attitude or Divine Bhava. Practical Vedanta is rare in these days. There are only dry discussions and meaningless fights over the non-essentials of various religions.

The central teaching of the Gita is Self-realisation in and through the world. The same thing is preached by sage Vasishtha to Sri Rama. To serve humanity,—God in manifestation,—and to think of God while living in the world amidst various activities, is superior to a cave life. Selfless work is Yoga. Work is Atma Pooja. There is no loss in Nishkamy Karma. Real spiritual progress starts with Nishkamy Karma Yoga.

Glorious Sannyasin! Serve everyone with intense love, without the idea of agency, without expectation of fruits, reward or even appreciation. Utilise this body-machine in selfless works. Feel that you are only *Nimitta* (instrument) in the hands of God or a *Sakshi* (witness) of Prakriti's activities; when you do Karma Yoga. Have no attachment to any place, person or thing. Keep up the mental poise amidst the toil and moil of the world without consideration of success or failure, gain or loss, victory or defeat, respect or disrespect, pleasure or pain. Have always a balanced mind. Have the mind firmly rooted in the Self amidst all activities. Then you will become a true Karma Yogi. Work elevates, when done in the right spirit. Even if people scoff at you, revile, beat, kill or taunt you, always be indifferent. Be steady in your Sadhana.

This Sadhana demands constant practice, steadfastness, patience, perseverance and endurance. Practice of combined Karma and Jnana Yoga in the world is far more difficult than the practice of pure Jnana Yoga in the cave of Himalayan re-

treats. The former Yogi will have no Vikshepa or tossing of the mind, while the latter will be easily disturbed by a little sound, or bustle of the city. To keep up meditation while performing actions is a different kind of difficult Sadhana. That Yogi who keeps up the meditation while performing actions is a powerful Yogi indeed. He has a different mind altogether.

Sannyasins do not want to remove *Mala* (impurities) by Nishkamya Karma Yoga. They think that service and Bhakti are nothing. They at once shave their heads, put on coloured clothes, remain in a cave and pose as great Munis or Yogins. They study a few books on Vedanta and style themselves as Jivanmuktas. This is a serious mistake. Even if there is one real Jivanmukta, he is a great dynamic force to guide the whole world. Some Sannyasins of the old, orthodox school think that a Jivanmukta is without powers. He can change or alter the destiny of the whole world.

A Sannyasin should understand that this body which is supported by the pillars of bones, bound by ligaments, which is plastered over with flesh and blood, and covered with skin, as the foul-smelling refuge of urine and excreta. He shall have to quit this bodily frame which is subject to old age and imbecility which is the abode of diseases, afflicted with pain and suffering, the transitory embodiment of material elements, characterised by the impure quality of Rajas and Tamas.

As a tree tumbles down from the bank of a river, as a bird quits a tree at day-break, so does the self become liberated from this delusion of a body. Thus by gradually abandoning all associations, and becoming free from pairs of opposites, his self shall merge in the Great Brahman.

The knowledge of the Supreme Brahman, extinction of all feelings of 'I' or 'Mine' etc., become patent to a Sannyasin only through the practice of unbroken meditation on the Supreme Brahman at all times. He who has not acquired this Knowledge of the identity of the individual with the Supreme Brahman will not obtain the highest good through mere dull meditation.

A Sannyasin must constantly mutter the sacred Mantras related to the Wisdom of Brahman and the sentences of the Vedanta which treat of the Eternal Truth. Brahman is the refuge of the all-knowing as well as ignorant beings. It is the final Goal of the aspirations of all who wish to become Immortal.

On account of the privilege of witnessing the Self, a Sannyasin gets freed from all work, and becomes indifferent to the pleasures of heavens as factors of embodiment and enchainment. By constantly brooding over the Supreme Brahman, the wise one attains the Highest Bliss.

Sannyasins, however exalted they may be in spirituality, should not eat meat, eggs, etc., and should not take tobacco, Ganja and opium. They should not smoke also. If they do so, they set up a very bad example to the public. They should lead an ideal exemplary life and advise the householders to give up meat, eggs, etc. Mind always imitates. If the Guru eats one pound of meat daily, the disciple will eat five pounds daily. '*Yatha Guru Tatha Sishya*'—'Just as the Guru is, so is the disciple.'

It is a great pity to see that some Sannyasins eat meat and eggs. They argue vehemently: "We are Paramahamsas. We can convert Tamasic foodstuffs into Sattvic ones. Meat helps our meditation. We do not care for public criticisms. For us vegetable and meat are the same. We will



take whatever is served on the table. We see Brahman in everything. Eggs come under vegetable diet only." Very fine logic indeed! They can see equal vision in meat and vegetable but they cannot have equal vision in censure and praise, heat and cold, pleasure and pain. A single harsh word or slight disrespect will throw them out of balance!

Sannyasa is sterner stuff, indeed. Comfortable Sannyasa is very dangerous. It is no Sannyasa at all. All the rules prescribed for Sannyasins in the Narada-Parivrajaka-Upanishad should be rigidly followed by Sannyasins. Then only they can shine

as true ideal Sannyasins. Then only they can set an example to the householders. Glory to the true, ideal Sannyasin, who leads an exemplary life! This world is in dire need of true, ideal Sannyasins who will serve the country and humanity with Atma Bhava and disseminate Self-knowledge and Bhakti, far and wide.

May Sannyasins, the repositories of divine knowledge, the torch-bearers of Truth, the beacon-lights of this world, the corner-stones of spiritual edifice and the central pillars of the eternal Dharmas of religion, guide the different nations of the world.

## Advice To Students

Student-life is the best period of life. There is no family responsibility. A student is free from family-worries. Your father and mother take care of you. The school is the place for building good character and forming good habits.

Mother also is your best teacher. She can mould your character. What the teacher teaches in one month can be taught easily by the mother at home in much lesser time.

Have a programme of your daily work. Have a time-table. Stick to it at any cost. Morning time (5 to 7 a.m.) is the best time for preparing your lessons. Do not burn the midnight oil during the examination. This will affect your health. Play games daily. This will keep your body quite fit and vigorous.

Live honestly, work conscientiously. Act nobly. Try to possess a large heart. A really great man is one who possesses a

large heart, great wisdom and good character.

A poor man may become a great man, if he so desires and if he tries to attain that greatness. Napoleon, Nelson, Lord Clive, Ramsay Mac Donald, Justice Muthu Swami Iyer, Cardinal Wolsey were born poor. They became great, through their exertion. Their glorious deeds are imperishable and their names immortal. But worldly position is nothing in the eyes of God.

Friends, you are the future hope of the motherland. You are the citizens of tomorrow. You should always think over the goal of life and live to attain it. The goal of life is the attainment of freedom from all sorts of misery or the state of Kaivalya or liberation from the cycle of births and deaths. Lead a well-regulated moral life. Moral strength is the backbone of spiritual progress. Ethical culture is part and parcel of spiritual Sadhana. Keep up Brahmacharya or the vow of celibacy.

By the observance of Brahmacharya many of the sages of yore have attained immortality. Brahmacharya is the source of new strength, vigour, vitality and success in life and eternal happiness hereafter. Loss of this vital energy is the cause of disease, miseries and premature death. Therefore, take particular care to preserve this vital energy. Practice of Brahmacharya gives good health, inner strength, peace of mind and long life. It invigorates the mind and the nerves and helps to conserve physical and mental energy. It augments the strength and courage. It gives power to face the difficulties in the daily battle of life. A perfect Brahmachari can move the world, can command nature and the five elements, like Jnanadeva.

Develop faith in the Vedas and the power of Mantra. Practise meditation daily. Take Sattvic food. Do not overload the stomach. Repent for your mistakes. Admit your faults freely. Never try to hide

your faults by lame excuses or by uttering falsehoods. Obey the laws of nature. Take plenty of physical exercise daily. Perform the prescribed duties at the appointed time. Develop simple living and high thinking. Give up vile imitation. Get thorough overhauling of your wrong Samskaras you have created through bad association. Study the Upanishads, the Yoga-Vasishtha, the Brahma Sutras and Sri Sankara's Select Works and other scriptures. Therein you will find real solace and peace. Some Western Philosophers have declared: "We are Christians by birth and faith but we can find the peace which the mind wants and the satisfaction the soul needs only in the Upanishads of the seers of East."

Move amicably with all. Love all. Serve all. Develop adaptability and the spirit of selfless service and penetrate into the hearts of all through untiring service. This is verily Advaitic realisation of unity or oneness.

## Advice To Teachers

A great onerous duty rests with the teachers and professors of schools in training the students in the path of Sadachara (right conduct) and moulding their character properly. They themselves should be endowed with ethical perfection. Otherwise it will be like the blind leading the blind. Before taking to the profession of a teacher, every teacher should feel the high responsibility of his or her position in the educational line. Mere intellectual achievement in the art of delivering dry lectures alone will not suffice. This alone will not adorn a Professor.

It is the duty of the teachers to explain

to boys and girls the importance of Brahmacharya or chastity and the evil effects of an immoral life and to instruct them in the various methods by which they can preserve the vital Virya, the soul-force or Atma Sakti that is hidden in them.

The future destiny of the world rests with the teachers and the students. If the teachers train their students in the right direction in the path of righteousness, the world will be filled with citizens, Yogis and Jivanmuktas who will radiate light, peace, bliss and joy everywhere.

O teachers and professors! Wake up



now. Train the students in the path of eyes now.  
 Brahmacharya and righteousness and morality. Make them true Brahmacharis. Do not neglect this divine work. You are morally responsible for this onerous work. This is your Yoga. You can have Self-realisation if you take up this work in right earnest. Be true and sincere. Open your

Blessed is he who truly endeavours in making his students true Brahmacharis. Twice blessed is he who tries to become a real Brahmachari. May the blessings of the Almighty Lord be upon them. Glory to the teachers, professors and students!

## Advice To Women

My silent adorations and prostrations to the women of the world who are manifestations of Mother Durga! Thou art the creatrix, generatrix and nourisher of the universe. The destiny of the whole world is entirely in your hands. You are holding the master key of the world.

Woman is a manifestation of Sakti, the illusory power of the Lord. She is Chaitanya Maya. She is Durga or Kali in manifestation. She is a faithful companion of man and his partner in life.

Woman is the mighty work of God, the wonder of nature, the marvel of marvels, the abridgment and epitome of the world, the model of the house, the real governor, the representative of Prakriti or Maya, the Lakshmi who adorns the house, the sweet companion and helpmate of man.

She adorns the family circle. She charms man with her beauty, sweet voice, gentleness, sweetness, tenderness, grace and ingrained devotion and spirit of service. The whole charm of a man's earthly life is centred in a woman. It is the woman that guides and controls the destiny of men and nations. She silently rules and governs the world.

Women are the backbone of the Hindu religion. The Hindu religion has been pre-

served by our women only. Therefore, they should be properly educated. They should be trained to lead the life of simplicity, purity, piety and devotion. If they are inspired, the whole world will be inspired.

In India, religion is maintained by women only. There is a peculiar religious instinct in them. Hindu women are highly devotional. They infuse the religious spirit in the males through their daily conduct and practical life. They get up early in the morning, cleanse the house, take bath, do Japa, make a small temple in their house, keep a picture of Lord Krishna, etc., and do Puja. They keep the place sacred and in the evening do Arati and prayer. The atheistic male members of the house are forced to do some prayer or other, through their influence, on account of fear. In reality, ladies only govern the house. They control the males. They are the manifestation of Sakti.

"Where women are worshipped, in that family great men are born; but where they are not honoured, there all acts are fruitless. Let women be always honoured by giving presents of clothes and ornaments and supplied with good food at festivals, jubilees and like occasions, and thereby made happy by those men who are desirous

of wealth and prosperity," says the Manu Smriti.

A good girl or woman should cultivate the habit of simplicity. She should never pretend to be what she is not. She should not shine in borrowed feathers like the jack-daw in peacock's feathers. She should not be vain in her mode of speech, dress, gait and behaviour. She should possess an unassuming amiable disposition. A modest woman commands respect.

When the husband has gone to office, the lady or the Devi of the house should instruct her children in reading and writing. She should nicely train them.

A sensible, cultured, devout and pious woman is the Lakshmi of the house. A pure and a pious woman is the goddess of the house. In fact she is the goddess who sheds sunshine and spirituality, happiness and joy, in the house.

Modesty is a fundamental virtue which a woman ought to possess. Modesty is the most precious ornament of a woman. It is the mark of nobility. A woman without modesty is like a flower without fragrance. Modesty raises the woman to the status of divinity. Nothing can atone for her want of modesty in a woman. Without modesty beauty is ungraceful. A modest woman is restrained by a sense of propriety. She has a good behaviour and good manners. A woman without modesty is a mere void, although she possesses many other virtues.

A Sattvic girl or woman is really beautiful. She is not in need of any artificial decoration with gold chains, gold pins, nose-screws or with any ornament or fashionable dress. Fashion is a terrible curse. It is a dreadful enemy of peace. It generates evil thoughts in the mind. Fashion causes passion. Therefore shun fashion and be simple.

The chief duty of a woman is to maintain her Pativrata-dharma. *Pati* means husband. *Vrata* means a vow. Pativratyam is a Mahavratam or great vow for a woman. A Pativrata is a chaste woman who has taken the vow of Pativratyam, who sticks to her Pativrata-dharma even at the risk of her life, who is faithfully devoted to her husband, who worships her husband as the Lord, and who serves him with heart, mind and soul. For a Pativrata, her husband is all in all. He is her sole refuge, protector, saviour and God. She deifies him as the Lord and adores him day and night. An evil thought can never enter her mind even in her dream. Anasuya, Savitri, Nalayani are examples of true Pativratas. A woman who practises Pativrata-dharma need not go even to temples for worship. The Lord of the temple is her husband.

Women, by their Pativrata-dharma, can do anything. Savitri brought back life to her dead husband Satyavan. She fought with the god of Death actually. You are all aware of the chastity of Anasuya, wife of Atri and mother of Sri Dattatreya. She turned the Trimurtis—Brahma, Vishnu and Siva,—as her children by her power of chastity. Madalasa was a Jnani. She converted her sons into Jnanis. She used to sing while rocking the child in the cradle:

*"Suddhosi, Buddhosi, Niranjanosi;  
Samsara Maya Parivarjitosi."*

"O child, thou art pure, all-knowing and spotless; beyond the reach of Maya." The children imbibed along with the milk of the mother the Vedantic teachings also and became Sages. You also should follow the example of Madalasa and train your children in the path of righteousness and Truth.

The wife should not look to the defects of her husband. Even if the husband is blind and deaf, even if the husband is ex-



tremely poor and illiterate, even if he is suffering from an incurable chronic disease, even if he is easily irritable and mean, the wife should serve him whole-heartedly. She must love him with a full heart. She should speak to him with warm affection. This is difficult; but, gradually she will gain strength of mind, power of endurance, through the grace of the Lord.

Even if the husband is unrighteous, the wife should be faithful to him. She should pray to God to put him in the path of righteousness, to infuse in his heart faith and devotion and to make him realise God-consciousness. A chaste wife who is sticking tenaciously to her Dharma can change the life of her husband to the path of righteousness even if he is leading a wicked life. Many have done so.

If a woman be pure, she can save and purify man. Woman can purify the race. Woman can make a home a sacred temple. The Hindu women have been the custodians of the Hindu race. The Hindu religion, the Hindu culture and civilisation still survive, in spite of the many foreign invasions, when other civilisations have come and gone, on account of the purity of Hindu women. The women are taught to regard chastity as their most priceless possession, and the loss of it as equal to the eternal damnation of their souls. Religion is ingrained in the Hindu woman from her very childhood. Hindu women illumine and enliven the house through the glory of their purity.

The eternal fidelity of a Hindu woman to her husband makes her an ideal of the feminine world. From time immemorial, Sita, Savitri, Damayanti, Nalayani, Anasuya and Draupadi have been regarded as sacred ideals of Indian womanhood. They are sublime and exemplary characters who have exalted womanhood to the height of

divine perfection. All of them were subjected to very severe tests in which their purity, courage, patience and other virtues were severely tried, and nobly did they come out through those tests.

Women of modern times should draw inspiration from them. They should try to lead the life they led. There is no use in becoming a star in the glittering cinema firmament which is set with dark, dense clouds. This is very poor ambition of ignorant persons. They should not come under the poisonous, materialistic influence. They have no idea of real independence. To move freely here and there, to do everything, to eat and drink anything, to imitate others, to drive a car, to go to the courts and do the work of a barrister is not independence.

Women of India should not try to imitate the women of the West. India is India. It is a spiritual country. It is a country of sages, Rishis, Yogins and Yoginis and philosophers. It is an unprecedented country in matters that relate to the soul or the Adhyatmic science. The ladies will have to play a very important part in the religious field, and in training of children.

The performance of domestic duties, the management of her household, the rearing of children, the economising of the family means—these are the woman's proper office. Woman is already endowed with divine power. She already governs the whole world by her power of love and affection. To make noble citizens by training their children and to form the character of the whole human race, is undoubtedly a power far greater than that which women could hope to exercise as voters, or law-makers, or presidents, or ministers, or judges.

One Sachi rocked the cradle of her son with the Dhvani (chant) of Hari's Name, infused in him the honey of devotion and

brought forth to the world a Gauranga who changed the mentality of the people of Bengal. Shivaji imbibed from his mother the spirit that worked in him; her true blood ran through his veins and made him what he turned out to be. Edison's mother—and not his ignorant teachers—answered his obstinate questions.

Women should become good mothers only. This is the function they will have to perform in the grand plan of God. This was meant in the divine plan. This is the will of God. Women have their own psychological traits, temperament, capacities, virtues, instincts and impulses. They have got their own disadvantages in society. They cannot, and should not, compete with men. They should not do the work of men.

Educated women can do any useful service to society according to their capacity, taste, temperament, aptitude, nature and standard of education, in a manner that is consistent or in perfect agreement with established principles or Dharmas of their mode of life. They should not do anything that can bring dishonour or infamy on them and their family and a blot on their

character. Without character, a man or woman is considered as dead while living.

The ideal woman is one who manages the house efficiently, who looks after the comforts of the husband and serves him as God, who trains the children to become good citizens, who leads a chaste and virtuous life, and who plays the noble and important part of a good wife and a good mother. Women should become ideal wives and mothers. This is nature's scheme in the grand plan. O Devis! Fulfil this and be happy for ever.

In olden days, Hindu women also led the life of celibacy, served the Rishis, meditated on the Atman, and obtained Brahma Jnana. They engaged themselves in Brahmachara and Nididhyasana.

O Devis! Do not waste your lives in fashion and passion. Walk in the path of righteousness. Preserve your Pativrata Dharma. Study the Gita, Upanishads, Bhagavadgita and Ramayana. Become good Grihastha-dharminis and Brahma Vicharinis like Sulabha and Gargi. See divinity in all. Open the door of Elysian bliss. Bring Vaikuntha in your homes.

## Advice To Doctors

At present many doctors are ignorant of many things despite their qualifications and degrees. They are in darkness and are not able to diagnose where there is a complication. They have no real specific for diseases like asthma, malaria, lumbago, phthisis, cerebro-spinal-meningitis, typhoid, diabetes, blood-pressure, etc. They are still experimenting on the patients. They are very greedy and they do not take real interest in the patients. They neither have sympathy nor Atma Bhava. They frighten

the patients when they have a simple cough by giving negative suggestions even when there is no trace of phthisis and by saying: "Oh, you have got T.B. You must go to the Sanatorium at Bhowali or Alps." The poor patient actually gets phthisis on account of fear caused by the destructive suggestions given by the ignorant doctor. Sympathetic doctors are very rare. How can the patients expect real solace and comfort from a doctor who has neither sympathy nor mercy, who has no training in



Nishkamya Karma Yoga and who is intent on accumulating wealth?

A noble doctor is one who says with sympathy and mercy even when a patient is in a dying condition: "Friend, don't be afraid. This disease is nothing. You will be alright in no time. This medicine will give you strength and vitality and make you quite fit." Mere kind and encouraging words from the mouth of a doctor or anybody are a great blessing. They infuse new strength, new vigour and new vitality in the distressed patient. The patient is pulled round by the strength of these sweet words even without medicine.

A doctor may object: "Swamiji, I cannot get any practice if I say like this. I cannot maintain myself. I will have to close my dispensary and clinic. You are wrong in your statement. I cannot subscribe to this."

My answer is: "If the doctor behaves in the above manner, and if he follows my instructions, he will have a roaring practice. He will be foremost and the best doctor in the city. People will flock in thousands to a kind, sympathetic doctor. They will place their very lives at his feet and sacrifice everything unto him. He will get the blessings of the patients and the fruits of their good Sankalpas. He will amass enormous wealth. They will pay him amply, willingly with pure feeling of love from the bottom of their hearts. O doctors! Practise this method and see whether you get money or not."

That doctor who has no knowledge of the 'Science of Suggestions' cannot do much good to the people. That doctor who gives a destructive negative suggestion to the patients does immense harm and fatal injury. The doctor who has neither sympathy nor patience, who has no Atma Bhava, who fails to see the Self in all living beings,

who simply uses his knowledge for accumulating wealth, lives in vain. His lot is pitiable indeed! He has eyes but sees not. Will a doctor dare charge heavy bills, if once he has clearly understood that the very same Atman which dwells in his own heart resides in all these patients?

In olden days, an ordinary Vaidya would cure a disease with some bazar drugs worth about two pies. In these days of modern civilisation and scientific advancement, allopathic medical treatment has become very costly. All people cannot afford to have this. The patient has to get examined his blood, urine, faeces and sputum. He has to visit the Sapta-Rishis of the medical profession. He has to go to bacteriologist first for this purpose and has to jingle something at the table. The bacteriologist directs the patient to go to a dentist to remove the tartar and treat his pyorrhoea which is believed to be the root cause of all diseases. He has to pay him also. Then he has to go to the radiologist for taking a skygraph in the X-rays. He has to pay there, again. Sometimes he has to pay the board of doctors for expert diagnosis. He finds no real relief even after spending much money and energy.

A doctor, when he is working in the hospital, should think that all patients are manifestations of the Lord. He should think that this body is a moving temple of God and that the hospital is a big temple of Brindavan or Ayodhya. He should think: "I am doing all my work to please God, and not for any selfish ends."

The doctor who attends on his patients with Atma Bhava without selfish motive for money, will have a roaring practice. He will have to give free medicines to the poor. This is a wonderful field for selfless service. Through this he can purify his heart and evolve quickly and have Self-realisation. Doctors will have to impart knowledge of

health to the public and teach first-aid to all.

A doctor's heart should melt at the suffering of the patients. He should move from door to door and treat the poor freely. He should spend one-tenth of his income in giving free medicines to the poor.

The doctor should always bear in mind that the knowledge of healing he has acquired is not solely for mercenary gain but to enable him to play a worthy part in society. Therefore apart from his 'practice' the doctor should ever watch and see where there is suffering and where his aid is needed. His duty does not merely consist in sitting at his table and waiting for the telephone bell to ring and call him to a case. This is a moral duty of doctors.

A great service that doctors can render to the nation is to make all the children 'hygiene-conscious'. The health of the nation is to be safeguarded and built up right

from the start. Parents fail to instruct children in elementary matters of health and hygiene. The doctors should make it their duty to impart the rudiments of personal hygiene to every child.

The doctor who is intent only upon extracting money from his patients, who has become callous to the sufferings of others, who is unsympathetic and harsh to sufferers, who imposes upon the credulity and ignorance of the patients and exploits their helpless condition is no better than a beast in human form. Grave retribution will overtake such a transgressor. Severe punishment is in store for him. The pain and the suffering that he heartlessly causes to the patients will react and descend upon him multiplied a hundredfold.

He should feel that all are manifestations of the Lord and that he is serving the Lord. Such a doctor is veritable God on this earth. Glory to this doctor!

## Advice To Businessmen

There is business ethics and a businessman should practise this ethics. Only then he will not be affected by sin. Only then he will prosper.

People say that one will have to tell lies in business if he wants to prosper. This is a serious mistake. Those who are strictly honest and truthful will flourish in business. More customers will go to them only, as they are truthful in their dealings.

Falsehood first entered a cloth-merchant's shop. If you enter a cloth-merchant's shop, he says first, that one yard costs Rs. 8/-, then bargaining or higgling goes on for one or two hours. At last he comes to Rs. 1.50 per yard. This sort of business goes on in most of the business-

houses. Cheating and falsehood are the basic traits of a businessman. His conscience has been blunted by covetousness and dishonesty. He is miserable in this world despite his wealth and possessions and, will be unhappy in the next world also, because he is not leading a moral life. He does not know what he is exactly doing, as his understanding is clouded.

Immorality does not mean sexual depravity and illegal adultery only. He who tells lies and cheats others is also leading an immoral life. He is also an immoral man in the broad sense of the term.

A manufacturer puts a spurious preparation in the market. One man mixes small stones in the wheat. One businessman



adulterates ghee, flour and other foodstuffs. The carpenter uses inferior quality of wood and charges as for the best wood. A contractor uses third-class bricks and charges for first-class bricks, etc. These are all instances of cheating.

What is this glittering prosperity in the business, after all? To eat a little delicious food, to move in a car, to become a Municipal Councillor cannot give you everlasting happiness. This is not the goal of life. This is a foolish man's idea of happiness. Quite puerile indeed! These are all toys of ignorant children. Wise people will laugh at these things.

Earn your bread by honest means. Dishonesty and cheating will bring on you incurable diseases like cancer, tuberculosis, ulcer in the stomach, fistula, deafness, dumbness, blindness, burning in the heart and feet, and deformity of limbs in your next birth. Action and reaction are equal and opposite. You will have to suffer in your next birth for every wrong deed you commit in this birth. Be careful in your thought, speech and action. Be good and do good. Understand the law of cause and effect.

Spend one-tenth of your income in charity. Charity covers multitude of sins. Do regular charity. Merely giving a few rupees

in charity occasionally when you are in distress, is not praiseworthy.

Take a moderate and reasonable profit. Be truthful and honest in your dealings. Do not smother and kill your conscience. Keep your conscience ever clean and pure. Do abundant charity. You can prosper in your business. You will not be tainted and corrupted by business. Goddess Lakshmi will ever dwell with you.

Do Satyanarayana Katha every full-moon day. Help social and religious institutions. Open Sanskrit schools and Ayurvedic dispensaries, hospitals, girls' schools, free primary schools. Dig wells in the villages. Construct Sankirtan Bhavans. Let your profit be well utilised in charitable purposes. You will earn great merit. You will be happy here and in the next world.

If you are ever conscious that the Lord or the Indweller is witnessing your thoughts and actions, if you really have understood the law of cause and effect, you will not dare to do any wrong deed, you will try to avoid evil action and gradually minimise your wrong deeds.

If you have really understood the Vedantic truth of oneness you will not try to deceive others. In deceiving others you deceive yourself. In helping others you help yourself. There is only one Self in all beings. That is the only Reality.

### *Sivananda on 'Peace'—15*

World-peace is possible when all the people of the world wake up to the facts governing universal life and when there is a heart-to-heart feeling of goodness, love and oneness among the inhabitants of the world.

## Advice To Legal Practitioners

There is observance of ethics for an advocate or Vakil, pleader or solicitor or barrister-at-law in the professional matters. He must not take up a doubtful case simply for the sake of fees, even when he feels sure that he cannot succeed.

He must not coach up false witnesses. Coaching up of false witnesses is itself a crime. It is a heinous sin. An advocate who coaches up false witness kills his conscience and soul also. In addition, he corrupts others also. He cannot have any progress in the spiritual path. He cannot argue forcibly, because falsehood has no strength. He cannot stand up with a majestic attitude as his moral backbone is fragile. He cannot be sure of success though he may twist and distort in diverse ways. Truth alone will triumph in the end.

When he takes up a case he must sincerely work for it even though there is some delay in getting his fees from his client.

He must take up the cases from poor people freely. He must work for the public good also without fees. This will be his Karma Yoga. This will purify his heart. Mark how sincerely and intensely Bhulabhai Desai worked for the cause of the public even during his last days. He has earned an undying reputation through this noble work. Prakriti has given you legal knowledge and you should utilise the knowledge in protecting her poor, helpless children.

Once Pundit Motilal Nehru wanted to take fees even from the Congress people. Jawaharlal Nehru said to him, "Venerable father! For whose sake are you accumulating money?" Motilalji said, "It is for you. You are my beloved son." Jawahar-

lal Nehru said, "Beloved father! I do not want even a single pie from your earnings, I will maintain myself independently. Kindly take up the case without fees. This is public Seva." This opened the eyes of Motilalji. He said, "Jawaharlal, call those people. I sent them away with an unsympathetic heart. I will work in this case without fees". The words of Jawaharlal changed the life of his father. He abandoned his legal profession and became a sincere fiery Congress worker.

Lawyers say, "We cannot pull on in this profession without telling direct lies or modified lies. We cannot get success without coaching up false witnesses." This is a mistake. Lawyers who deliberately falsify truth and twist falsehood to make it appear as fact are the minions of Kalipurusha himself. They have allied themselves to the undivine forces of darkness and become the tools of Satan. There are some conscientious Vakils who do not take up weak cases and who do not coach up false witnesses. They are lions in the bar. They have roaring practice. They are known everywhere as honest and sincere advocates. Clients flock to them in great numbers. Truthful persons only will shine and get success. Study the book "Experiments with Truth", by Mahatma Gandhi and you will know how truthful was Gandhiji in his profession.

By your clever advocacy you have sent many innocent persons to the jail and to the gallows. What a great crime! What a horrible unpardonable deed! You will reap the consequences of this sinful act. You will have no good merit in your store for good future birth. You will take inferior births. You will suffer from incurable diseases in the next birth.



Have you not heard of the great sensational Tirupati case? Lord Venkatesa himself came as a witness. The judge gave up his job and became an ascetic.

So established in untruth, deception and crookedness is man that he is not fully aware how great and grave an injury he is doing to society. The existence of law is to uphold truth and dispense justice. But immorality in the profession strikes

at the root of justice and righteousness itself and where truth is to be established there falsehood is glorified.

Money is not the goal. It cannot give you eternal happiness. Lead a virtuous life. Be honest and truthful. Do not coach up false witnesses. Plead for the poor freely. Do Japa, Kirtan and meditation. You too can attain the final emancipation or the abode of immortal bliss.

## Advice To Industrialists

Times have changed vastly. Society is not what it was hundreds of years before. Humanity has developed newer fields that were absent in the ancient social order. There is industrialisation of whole nations. Large-scale industries and factory systems are everywhere. These factors give rise therefore for ethical rules peculiarly suited to the conditions and situations prevailing under these special circumstances.

An industrialist becomes too machine-minded. He comes to regard the army of workers he employs to be so many automations. He has no sympathy towards the labourers. This is wrong. It is his moral duty to look to their welfare inasmuch as their labours go to build up his prosperity.

Usually labour in vast large-scale industries is recruited from the domain of poverty. They are obliged to work for their very existence. The industrialist should not take advantage of this and extract sweated labour. He must pay fair and adequate wages, afford them facilities instead of driving them to undertake strikes, demonstrations, etc. Heartless exploitation of labour is a grave transgression of moral law.

Industrial relationship is based upon

contract. However purely secular the sphere of industry is, yet a contract between man and man is always a sacred matter. This contract too should be viewed as such. Then alone Dharma will prevail. The worker is equally responsible for respecting this mutual contract and should give his sincere best in the interest of his employer. This relationship is not merely centred upon giving and receiving money.

The existence of jealousy, malicious rivalry and cut-throat competition is the bane of modern industry. This is Asuric and unethical. Big industrialists combine not for co-operation but to crush and destroy smaller concerns. To corner the market by superior buying power and ruin small-scale industries is unethical. Creating artificial demand through wanton destruction of valuable raw materials when the latter is sorely needed by people, is deliberately flouting of ethical law. This is why grave retribution overtakes civilisation based upon such pillars of Adharma.

Greed and cupidity are the causes of industrial immorality. Insatiable craving for profit drives you to a total disregard of all Dharma. It makes you quite unscrupulous.

pulous. Therefore give up greed. Lust not after wealth. Know that God has given you industrial acumen, genius for organisation and money-power to promote the welfare of human community. You are custodians of special talent and wealth for utilising them for common weal first, and then increase your prosperity.

May the present day industrialists realise their precarious drift towards Adharma and become helpers to the progress and welfare of the human race! May they stick to the laws of ethics and thus derive true happiness and peace in addition to material profit!

## Advice To Nations

Just as there is social ethics for the society, there is international ethics for the nations of the world for maintaining peace. Nations can prosper only if they stick to the principles of international morality. Had all the nations adhered to the international moral principles, there would not have been any war at all.

Lust for power, dominion and self-aggrandisement overpowers the nations and makes them lose the power of understanding and the faculty of morality. Hence they break the ethical principles.

The ethical laws which govern the relations of individuals to one another in society should also govern the relations of nations to one another. There is absolute necessity for international morality. This dire need is keenly felt by the heads of nations after the Great War. A World-Federation should be established. Then alone international morality can be put into practice. A well-organised World-Federation can prevent war among nations and ensure peace in the world.

But such an organisation will function successfully only when its members are noble men with pure and lofty ideals. They should be imbued with the spirit of tolerance, cooperation and brotherhood. They must set aside narrow racial spirit and have

wide universal vision. If not the organisation will fail like the League of Nations after the Great War and the United Nations Organisation today.

The advance of science has removed the barriers of time and space. Within a few hours you can reach London and New York. Now railways, ships, aeroplanes, radio, television have made the world one. The whole world is a closely knit unity now. Countries and nations are now interdependent. Economic prosperity or depression of one country reacts on all other countries. If one nation suffers, it brings sufferings on the other nations also, just as a diseased rheumatic knee-joint reacts on the mind and the other parts of the body also. A country or a nation cannot rise much in culture and civilisation unless other countries or nations also are raised.

Though the whole world is brought into a sort of unity, yet there is no international ethical advancement. There is not much justice, love and fair treatment among the nations. The brotherhood of man is forgotten. The law of the 'survival of the fittest', which applies to the animals in the forests, rules the international relations. 'Might is right'. Those who possess more atomic bombs are the rulers of the world. They can get more privileges in trade and



commerce. They can be in possession of vast dominions. They exploit the weak, hold them in subjection. This is the cause for war and moral degeneration.

Equal privileges should be given to all nations. Every nation should have equal rights. Nothing should be the monopoly of a particular nation. No nation should have absolute sway or supremacy in anything. Sea, land and air also must be the common property of all nations, just as sunlight, breeze and water are the common property of all. All are children of God. Hence all are brothers.

Misunderstood and mispractised nationalism, imperialism and militarism stand in the way of the growth of international mo-

rality. Imperialism and militarism should die. Humanism, humanitarianism and Vedantism should take their places. Then alone there will be perpetual peace in the world. The Presidents and Dictators should come to India, study Vedanta and live in the spirit of Vedanta.

Vedanta and Vedantic ethics should become compulsory for all students in all schools and colleges of the world. It must be properly understood and put into practice by all. This alone will put an end to the manufacture of atomic bombs and machine-guns. This alone will contribute to peace, universal love, unity, proper understanding, world-harmony and brotherhood to mankind.

## Message To The West

The West is immersed in scientific discoveries and materialistic advancement. Science has invented many marvellous things. Scientists are labouring day and night in their laboratories to invent many more things. They have invented television. They wish to create life and human beings in their laboratories. Science has added many comforts to man. He can, in a matter of a minute, ascend to the hundredth storey through the electric lift. He can travel to Europe or America in the aeroplane. He can hear the speech and music of the people of the world at his radio in his own house. He can cook his food through electricity. But it has made life very complex; it has rendered very keen the struggle for existence. It has increased the restlessness of mind. It has not contributed to the peace of man. Everybody admits this solid fact. Scientists should stop this business of invention for some-

time and direct all their energies towards purification of their minds and concentration on God or the Inner Self. They can behold now the hidden mysteries or marvels of the soul. They will be stunned now, at their new spiritual discoveries. Scientists are really wonderful external Raja Yogis. Their attention and energies are directed towards the external universe and physical forces of nature. If they practise inner life, if they direct their attention towards God, if they try to live in the Self within, they will turn out to be wonderful Rishis, sages or Yogis. They have got all materials in them that can make them real Yogis in no time. What is wanted is that they will have to look within, to turn their minds towards the Self within.

America is keen after Dollars. The more one runs after money the more greed and selfishness he develops. Money is doubt-

less necessary for man but money is not the goal of life. One should not worship mammon. Dollar cannot give peace and bliss. Peace can be had in one's own Self only through service, sacrifice, purity, love and meditation.

How infinitely you are busy with your body and its conceits, 'I', 'I', 'I'! "I am a doctor. I am an Englishman. I am an American. I am an Italian. I know everything. I am superior to that man. I can do anything. I am clever. I am very intelligent. I am very strong. I am the doer. I am the actor. I have done much charity. I have built a hospital in my father's name." There is no end for this 'I'. As soon as this identification with this perishable, impure body ceases, as soon as you realise that you are not this body, that 'this body is not I', that you are the immortal all-pervading Self or Atman, all sorrows will depart, all difficulties will vanish, you are saved from this terrible Samsara. You will reach the abode of bliss, the city of deathlessness, obtain inexhaustible spiritual wealth and drink the nectar of Immortality.

There are one hundred and twenty-three storied buildings in America. Each apartment in each storey is large and filled with air-conditioners and up-to-date electronic equipments. But there is no peace. What is wanted is a spacious or large loving heart with spiritual conditions (practice of Japa, Yoga, sublime divine virtues, constant meditation, Atma Bhava, Self-realisation) with high sublime thinking. You may live in a small thatched cottage; it does not matter much. If you have a loving large heart, you will be happy and peaceful.

Tell me, brother, who is superior? He who lives in a hundred-twenty-three storied building in America with plenty of aero-

planes and cars, with plenty of money, rolling in Dollars, with plenty of cares, worries, anxieties, with plenty of blood-pressure and other diseases, with a small constricted heart, with plenty of ignorance and its modifications, viz., lust, greed, wrath, etc.; or he who lives in a small grass hut on the banks of the Ganga, in Rishikesh, Himalayas, with plenty of health, with large magnanimous heart, with plenty of divine qualities, with plenty of divine bliss, perennial joy and peace, with plenty of knowledge of the Self, without any money, cares, worries and anxieties.

Vedanta is that bold philosophy which teaches unity of life or oneness of consciousness. It is that supreme philosophy which boldly proclaims with emphasis and force that this little Jiva or human being is identical with the Eternal or the Absolute. It is that sublime philosophy which elevates the mind at once to magnanimous heights of Brahmanhood, Divine splendour and glory, which makes a man absolutely fearless, which destroys all barriers that separate man from man, and which brings concord, unruffled peace and harmony to the suffering humanity at large. It is the only philosophy that can really unite, on the basis of the one common Self in all, a Hindu and a Mohammedan, a Catholic and a Protestant, an Irishman and an Englishman, a Jain and a Parsi, on a common platform and in the core of their hearts also. It is the only philosophy that, when properly understood and practised, can put an end to World Wars and all sorts of dissensions, splits and skirmishes that exist in different nations and communities. All philosophers should bow down their heads with implicit obedience and perfect submissiveness before this grand philosophy. Sri Sankara, Dattatreya, Yajnavalkya and others preached and expounded this unique



philosophy. Swami Vivekananda and Swami Rama Tirtha also preached this unprecedented philosophy in America.

All 'Isms' are bound to die, if they have no God as the basis of their activities. God is the very foundation of society. He is the substratum of this world. He is the very prop of this universe. He is the source for everything. He is the support of this body, mind and the senses. He is the Mind of minds, Prana of Pranas, Ear of ears, Eye of eyes and Soul of souls.

Communism is doubtless an offshoot of Vedanta but it is a rebel child of Vedanta, as it denies God or the Self. It wishes to have equality. It wants to give comfort to people. It wishes to share the property of the State equally between the subjects. This is good. But it does not want God or anything about God. It wants toast and butter alone. It wants bread and jam alone. Bread, butter, jam—this is their all in all. This is ignorance. This is delusion. Can material comforts alone give real happiness to people? Can material comforts elevate the souls of the people? Can they give food, solace, joy, peace, immortality, perfection for the soul? Certainly not. Where there is God, where there is religion, where

there is spiritual Sadhana for attaining self-purification and self-realisation, where there is study of religious books, where there is abundance of religious institutions, holy men, monks, Yogins and high souls, there can be peace, prosperity, sound policy and happiness.

The world's need today is the Message of Love! Kindle the light of love in your heart. Love all. Include all creatures in the warm embrace of your love. Cultivate Visva Prem or all-embracing, all-inclusive, cosmic love. Nations can be united by pure love only. Love is a mysterious divine glue that unites the hearts of all. It is a divine magical glue that can unite nations. It is a divine magical healing balm of a very high potency. Charge every action with pure love. Kill cunningness, greed, crookedness and selfishness. It is extremely cruel to take away the lives of others by using poisonous gases. This is a capital sin. The scientist who manufactures the gas in the laboratory cannot escape from sin. Forget not the day of judgment. What will you say unto the Lord then, O ye mortals! who run after power, dominions and wealth? Have a clean conscience and mercy. You will enter the kingdom of God.

## Message of Freedom

Om, Children of Immortality! The Lord is within you. He is seated in the hearts of all beings. Whatever you see, hear, touch or feel is God. Therefore hate not anybody, cheat not anybody, harm not anybody. Love all and be one with all. You will soon attain eternal bliss and perennial joy. Be self-disciplined. Be simple and harmonious in thought, feeling, diet and dress. Love all. Fear none. Shake

off lethargy, laziness, fear. Lead the 'Divine Life'. Be a seeker after truth or reality. Understand the Law of Dharma. Be alert and vigilant. Overcome sorrow and conflict through enquiry and reflection. Move towards freedom, perfection and eternal bliss every second. Is there anyone among you who can say with emphasis and force: "Now I am a deserving aspirant. I am yearning for Moksha. I have equip-

ped myself with the four means. I have purified my heart through selfless service, Kirtan and Japa. I have served the Guru with faith and devotion and I have attained his grace and blessings." That man can save the world. He will soon become a cosmic beacon-light, a unique torch-bearer of wisdom, a dynamic Yogi.

O man! Get yourself ready now. It is a shameful thing that you have lived in vain till now and spent the life in eating, drinking, sleeping, idle gossiping and worthless pursuits. You have not done any meritorious act. The hour draws nearer. It is not too late even now. Start *Namasmarana*, or the repetition of the Lord's Name from this second. Be sincere and earnest. Love all. You can make yourself worthy of His Grace. You can cross the formidable ocean

of births and deaths and attain eternal bliss and immortality. Never miss a day in meditation. Regularity is of paramount importance. When the mind is tired, do not concentrate. Give it a little rest. Do not take heavy food at night. It will disturb your morning meditation. If evil thoughts enter your mind during Japa or meditation, do not use your will-force to drive them away. You will lose your energy. Japa, Kirtan, Pranayama, Satsanga or association with sages, practice of Sama (serenity), Dama (self-restraint), Yama (right conduct), Sattvic or pure food, study of scriptures, meditation, Vichara (Atmic enquiry) all will help you to control the mind and attain eternal bliss and immortality. May God bless you.

## Message of Silence

Once the disciple of Bhaskali approached his Guru and asked him where that eternal, the supreme infinite Brahman of the Upanishads is? The master spoke not. The disciple asked him again and again but the master did not open his mouth. He kept perfect silence. At last the teacher said: "I have been telling you again and again, but you do not understand me. What am I to do? The Brahman, the Infinite, the Eternal cannot be explained through words. Know it by deep silence. There is no other place for Him to dwell in, but in the one eternal deep Silence. *Ayam Atma Santah*—This Atman is Silence."

Silence is Atman. Silence is Brahman. Silence is Truth. Silence is Immortal Soul. Silence is the substratum for this body, mind, Prana and the senses. Silence is the basis or background for this sense-universe.

Silence is power. Silence is a living force. Silence is the only Reality. The peace that passeth all understanding is Silence. The goal of your life is Silence. The aim of life is Silence. The purpose of your existence is Silence. Silence is within. It can be felt or realised by silencing the boisterous mind. If you can feel it within, you can surely express it without.

The message of the Sahara desert is Silence. The message of the Himalayas is Silence. The message of the Avadhuta who lives stark naked at the icy Gangotri or Kailas is Silence. The message of Lord Dakshinamurthy was Silence. Who can describe the glory of Silence?

There is no healing balm better than Silence for those persons who have a wounded heart from failures, disappointments and losses. There is no soothing panacea



better than Silence for those who have wounded nerves from the turmoil of life, from friction, rupture and frequent domestic quarrels and troubles.

In deep sleep you are in close touch with this stupendous Silence, but there is the veil of *Avidya* or ignorance. The silence that you enjoy during deep sleep and the silence that you experience at dead of night give the clue to the existence of that ocean of Silence or Brahman.

Silence is golden. Silence is more eloquent than words. Seers and sages do not talk. Silence is the means of communication. Real aspirants who are pure and who live with sages only know this unique language of Silence.

In that stupendous Silence, you will find the proof of the existence of God. Learn to enter into the Silence in the morning at 4 a.m. for one hour by withdrawing the senses and the mind from the external objects. The language of God is Silence. Listen to Its soundless voice by stilling the mind. Hear the voice of the Silence with rapt attention. It will guide you. It will remove all your doubts. It will inspire you. Learn all about Silence from the newborn baby and become wise.

In the beginning, when darkness was rolling over darkness, there was Silence only. This Silence is *Chit*. This Silence is *Ananda*. This Silence is pure, all-pervading, indivisible consciousness. Maya lies hidden in the corner of this Silence in a seed-state during Cosmic-Pralaya. In the beginning of Maha Kalpa, Brahman wills and vibration (*Spandana*) arises. The equilibrium of three Gunas is then disturbed. Sattva, Rajas and Tamas manifest. Then the Samsaric wheel is set in motion. It is the Rajas that generates much activities and much noise in the world. Rajas is passion. Rajas is motion.

In common parlance to sit quiet without talking to anybody is silence. If your friend does not write to you for a long time, you will say: "My friend is keeping icy silence. I do not know why." If nobody talks in a big lecture hall for some time when there is a thrilling lecture, you say: "There was pindrop silence last evening when Mr. So and so delivered a lecture." When the boys make much noise in the class the teacher says: "Silence please." When you come across two Sadhus, one Sadhu tells: "The other Sadhu is a Mowni. He is my friend. He is observing the vow of silence for the last six years." This is all physical silence.

If you do not allow the eyes to see the objects, and if you withdraw them from the objects through the practice of *Pratyahara* or *Dama*, this is silence of that particular sense—eye. If you do not allow the ears to hear any sound, it is silence of that particular Indriya—ear. If you observe complete fast on Ekadasi days without taking even a drop of water, it is silence of that Indriya—tongue. If you do not perform any work and if you sit on Padmasana for three hours, it is silence of the feet and hands.

What is really wanted is silence of the bubbling mind. You can observe the vow of silence but the mind will be building images. Sankalpa will be cropping up. Chitta will be developing memories. Imagination, reasoning, reflection and various other functionings of the mind will be going on continuously. How can you have real peace or silence now? Intellect should cease functioning. The inner astral senses should be at perfect rest. All the waves of the mind should be completely subsided. The mind should rest in the ocean of Silence or Brahman. Then only you can enjoy real ever-lasting Silence.

Of course much depends upon the practice. You know that practice makes a man perfect. Feel the thrill of extreme joy that dawns when you are nearing the goal. You will experience the wonderful calm now. In that profound Silence, all the mysteries of the Atman will be revealed unto you, like Amalaka fruit in the palm of your hand. Avidya and Maya and their effects, Moha, fear, etc., will take to their heels. There will experience the wonderful calm now. In bliss only everywhere.

Purify the mind and meditate. Be still and know that you are God in essence. Calm the mind. Silence the bubbling

thoughts and surging emotions. Plunge yourself deep into the innermost recesses of your heart and enjoy the magnanimous Silence.

Understand the power of Silence. The power of Silence is infinitely greater than lectures, talks, orations and discourses. The language of Silence is the language of God. Sit silently and restrain the mental modifications. Sit silently and send out the inner spiritual force to the whole world. The whole universe will be benefited. Live in Silence. Rest in Silence. Become Silent. Know the Self and be free!

## Inspiring Message For Everyone

Every man in the world is restless and is striving after something; what, he does not know. He feels he is in want of something, the nature of which he does not exactly comprehend. He seeks in the accomplishment of ambitious projects the rest, that he feels, he is in need of. But he finds that worldly greatness, when secured, is a delusion and a snare; he doubtless does not find any happiness or peace in it. He gets degrees, diplomas, titles, honours, power, name and fame; he marries, he begets children; in short, he gets all that he supposes would give him happiness. But he finds no rest. Pious men, saints and sages declare that this restlessness of every man, this state of discontent, dissatisfaction and uncomfortableness of being ill at ease with himself and surroundings, is solely due to the loss of the companionship of the partner of his Soul.

There is not even an iota of bliss in this world. All are illusory in this universe.

All worldly things are generative of pain only and are fraught with all dangers. This life is ephemeral. There is nothing so baneful as this life which is perishable in its nature. What beauty is there to be enjoyed in this body which is composed of blood and flesh and which has a tendency to rot? Even the most virulent poison is no poison but the sensual object is truly so. The former kills only one body, whereas the latter destroys many bodies in successive births.

Fie on this uneven life which is attended with pains, sorrows, diseases and death. You cannot find one object in this universe which is sweet and beneficial for one twinkling of the eye at least. Even the greatest of persons will, in course of time, become dust—the lowest of the low. Emperors, poets, scientists, orators and intellectual giants have come and gone.



It is very difficult to get a human birth. This precious life is meant for attaining Self-realisation. Ignorant persons, like innocent children that do taste again and again sweetmeats which give sweetness for the time being, indulge themselves in illusory, transient, sensual pleasures and are caught, again and again, in the wheel of births and deaths. They are not ashamed to repeat the same sensual act. What a miserable life they lead! How pitiable is their lot!

You are elated when you get married, when you get a son, when you get some sudden fortune or increase in salary; but you feel sorry when your wife dies, when you lose your money, when you are thrown out of employment, when you suffer from some acute pain.

Now tell me, friend, what do you really find in this illusory world—happiness or pain? Have you now understood the illusory nature of this world? This world is a mere show. The mind and the senses are deceiving you at every moment. You have mistaken pain for pleasure. There is not even an iota of happiness in this universe.

Will your son, or daughter, or friend, or relative, help you when you are about to die? Have you got one sincere unselfish friend in this world? All are selfish. There is no pure love. But that Lord, your real Immortal Friend and Father who dwells in your heart, will never forsake you though you may forget Him. Adore Him in silence, that God of gods, that Divinity of divinities, Highest of the most high. May He bless you with His love, wisdom, power and peace!

Minus skin, minus dress, minus ornaments, physical beauty is nothing. Just imagine for a moment that the outer skin is removed. You will have to stand with a long stick to drive away crows and vul-

tures. Physical beauty is superficial, illusory and fading. It is skin-deep only. Do not be deluded by external appearances. It is the jugglery of Maya. Go to the source—Atman, the Beauty of beauties, the Everlasting beauty.

If your hairs become grey, that is the first warrant from Lord Yama, the God of Death. You must get yourself ready to meet him. The wrinkles on the face and the bending of the body will remind you of the warrant. When the teeth fall and the eyesight becomes dim, you must be fully prepared to greet him. You will get three hiccups or final passing of breaths, lying on the bed. When the last hiccup comes, all your possession will be taken away by your sons and partners. One will run after the savings bank pass-book, another will take hold of the cash chest, the third of your provident fund papers and insurance claims, the fourth of the ornaments that lie on your person, and so on. Such is life on this earth-plane. Why can't you see that the money is well spent for your spiritual progress and the service of the poor and the Mahatmas? Friends! Try to attain immortality through devotion, meditation, purity, service, Japa, prayer and enquiry. All troubles and miseries will come to an end.

O Nectar's sons! Enough of this mundane life. Enough of this life of passion on this earth-plane. You have spent your whole life, energy and time in obtaining material wealth, power, name and fame. All your efforts have gone in vain. All your wealth is only a broken shell when compared with the inexhaustible or supreme wealth of Atman. Obtain this spiritual wealth. Give up this vain selfish struggle. You have walked too long with passionate eyes in this universe. Give up this lustful look. Meditate. Look within now and be-

hold the marvellous Self and be free.

Atman or Brahman or Supreme Self is the hidden treasure. It is the pearl of incalculable value. It is the Jewel of jewels. It is the Gem of gems. It is the imperishable, inexhaustible, supreme wealth which no dacoit can rob. It is Chintamani of Chintamanis that will give man whatever he wishes.

Brahman is beyond speech, time and causation. It is limitless. It is tranquil and It shines with equal effulgence in all bodies. It cannot be a particular thing. It is *Chaitanya* or pure consciousness. It is *Vastu*. It is *Sat-Chit-Ananda*.

Knowing the nature of Brahman or Atman as such, attain freedom or perfection. Think yourself bodiless. Identify yourself with the Supreme Peace and Eternal Bliss of your all-pervading Self.

May you all lead the Divine Life, sharing what you have with others, singing the Lord's name, rejoicing in Him alone and melting the mind in the Supreme Self!

By indiscriminate clinging to wife, children, house, wealth and property, you have forgotten all about your essential divine nature. In youth you are enveloped in ignorance; in adult age you are entangled in the meshes of women; in old age you are groaning under the burden of Samsara. When will you find time, friend, to do virtuous actions and worship God?

Sensual pleasure is momentary, deceptive, illusory and imaginary. A grain of pleasure is mixed with a mountain of pain. Enjoyment cannot bring satisfaction of desires. On the contrary, it makes the mind more restless through intense craving. Sensual pleasure is the cause of births and deaths. It is an enemy of peace and knowledge.

Abandon these selfish struggles and schemes for amassing wealth. Do all ac-

tions with Nishkama Bhava. March directly to that wire-puller (God), who is moving these toys of fleshy human bodies, who is keeping up this big show, who is behind this pageant. In Him only you will find everlasting happiness and perennial joy. Merge in Him by practising daily Japa and meditation.

Give up clinging to this illusory life. Take refuge in God. Develop lasting, sustained dispassion (*Vairagya*) or indifference to sensual enjoyments herein and hereafter. You have had countless fathers, mothers, wives and children in the past. You came alone. You will go alone. No one will follow you save your own actions. Worship God. Realise Him. All miseries will come to an end.

O Ram! Do you not wish to attain the illimitable kingdom of eternal bliss and perennial joy? Do you not long to attain everlasting peace and immortality? Do you not desire to dwell in that sweet abode of Brahman where there is neither pain nor sorrow, neither hunger nor thirst, neither fear nor grief, neither doubt nor delusion?

Then come, my beloved Ram! Develop real, lasting *Vairagya* (dispassion or mental non-attachment) by looking into the defects of sensual life (*Dosha Drishti*) and through association with Sages, Sadhus and Sannyasins (*Satsanga*). Serve, Love, Give. Be kind. Be good. Do good. Practise vigorous Japa and meditation and attain God-consciousness or Self-realisation (*Brahma Jnana*) in this very birth.

May you all possess that master-key, viz., *Vairagya*, to open the realms of Brahmic Bliss!

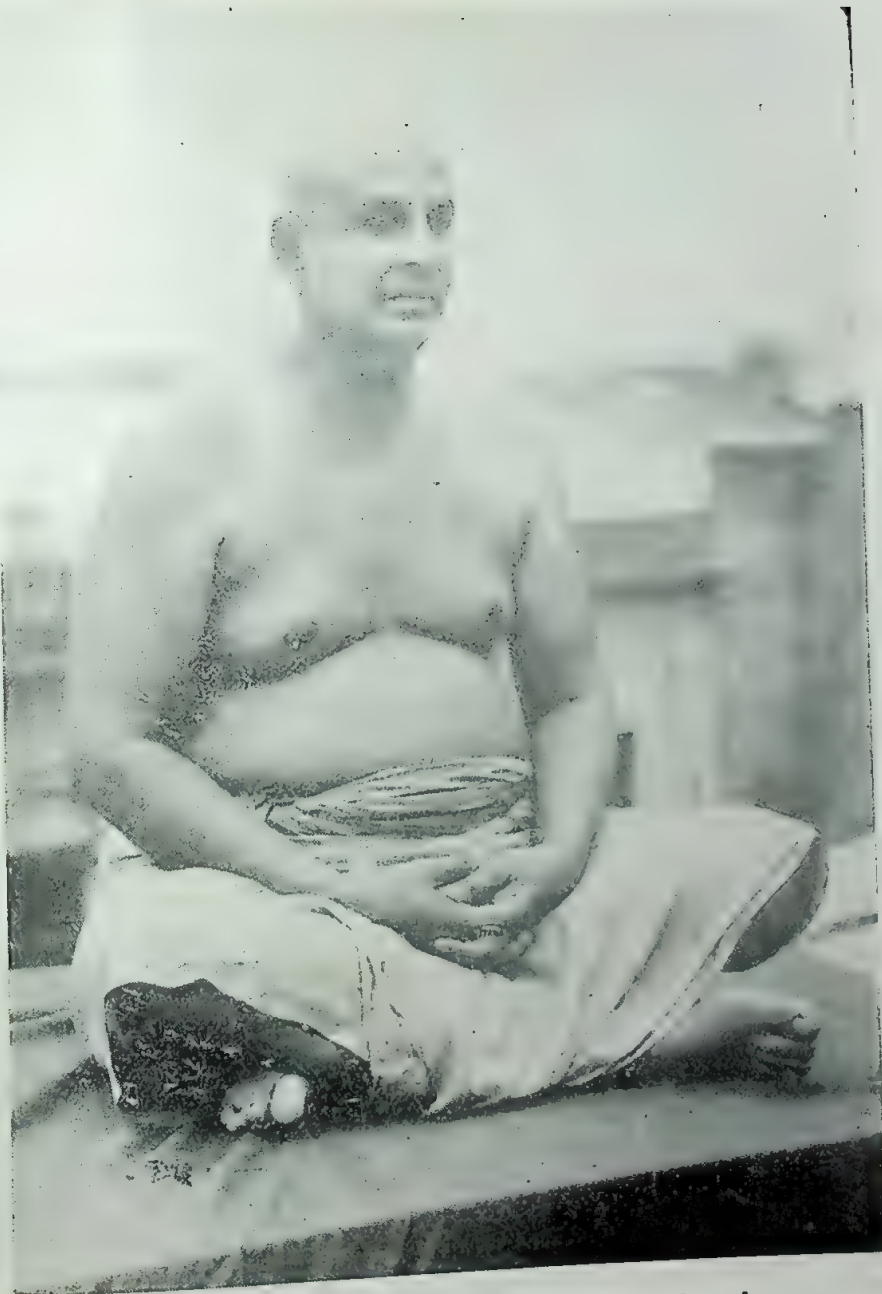
May you all attain *Kaivalya* or *Atma-Svarajya* or Independence! May you all dwell in the immaculate Brahmic seat of ineffable splendour and glory!



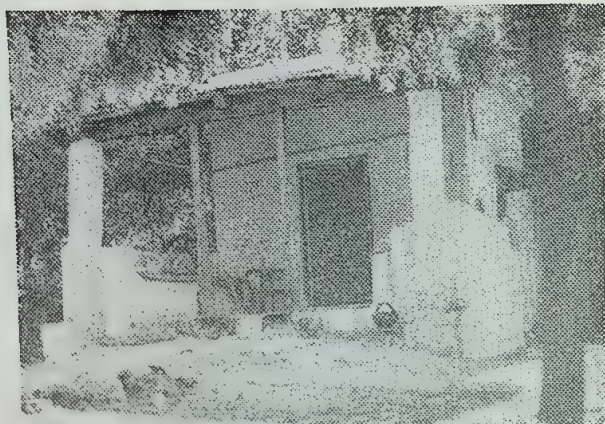
**SECTION VI**  
**Sivananda**  
**His Disciples**  
**and**  
**His Birth Centenary**







**His Holiness Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj**  
The Mighty Spiritual Magnet that attracted disciples and devotees, seekers and aspirants, from every walk of life from all over the world, in hundreds and thousands.



Sri Curudev's Kutir in Swargashram during the days of his Tapascharya, where his mighty Mission had its germination



Swami Atmananda



Ramashram Library which sheltered Sri Gurudev and his disciples when they left Swargashram



Sri P.K. Vinayagam of Madras with the marble statue of Gurudev



Sri Kashiram Gupta of Calcutta



# The Great Fulfilment

## SWARG ASHRAM SADHU SANGHA

From the tiny Kutir on the banks of the holy Ganga, in Swarg Ashram, great marvels were done by Swami Sivananda. It was the late twenties and early thirties, when the world had not yet recovered from the horrible effects of World War I. The doctor who was healing the sick patients in the rubber plantations of Malaya during and after the War, wended his way to the Himalayas, hearing the inner call of the Divine, to become a Divine Doctor, to bring solace to suffering souls. Perhaps the Mission for which he was born was guiding him and keeping him restless! \* The coming of God into his life in stages was, in fact, the stages in which his Mission was unfolding itself and pressing itself forward through him. However, that tiny Kutir was the holy place where the sprouting of the mighty Mission of the Master could be felt and seen, taking a solid shape.

Having taken Sannyasa on the 1st of June, 1924, Swami Sivananda did intense and superhuman penance in the Lakshman-jhula area and Swarg Ashram. When and where he had final illumination or Realisation is a mystery or secret known only to him. *(He had, however, revealed to his very intimate disciples that he has built the Lord Sri Viswanath Mandir at that site where he had Illumination, and that place was a jungle of Bael trees, where he used to sit in meditation for long hours.)* But its effect was unfailing in its impact and was felt by those who happened to meet him or read his writings. From early thirties, earnest seekers and aspirants

started gathering around him for spiritual guidance and solace, even as bees flock to a full-blossomed honey-flower.

At the same time, many of the Sadhus living in Swarg Ashram too were in need of proper spiritual guidance, in addition to the medical facilities and services, from Swami Sivananda. With the coming of earnest and dedicated seekers ready to carry on the behest of the Master, the vision of his Mission became very perspicuous before Swami Sivananda. He had the spiritual wealth; the eager aspirants were there to receive and to distribute; there were the masses to be awakened, too. He felt the urgent need for an organised method of working to broadcast the glory of the Divine Name, the tenets of Divine Life. At this time it is that Swami Sivananda formed the Swarg Ashram Sadhu Sangha on the 24th of August, 1933 and got it duly registered at Lucknow under the Societies Registration Act. This was in total contradiction with his hitherto attitude. The *My Magazine of India*, Madras, used to publish regularly articles of Swami Sivananda; and the earliest book of Swamiji entitled "*Practice of Yoga*" was published in the year 1929. Aspirants, who were inspired by these, wrote to Swamiji requesting to accept them as his disciples and seeking permission to stay with him to practise Yoga. But Swamiji declined saying that he was only on ordinary Sadhu and that he does not make or keep disciples with him. That very Swamiji now accepted disciples and even formed the Swarg Ashram Sadhu Sangha in August 1933; and when the Sadhus elected him as its President, accepted it too!

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\*Vide the article, on page 8, "How God Came into My Life."

### THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY

Circumstances in Swarg Ashram obliged Swami Sivananda to leave that place. Look at the marvellous way the hands of the Unseen guiding the Master towards the fulfilment of his Mission! He moved, temporarily, to the Ram Ashram Library on the right bank of the Ganga, right across, on the 17th of January, 1934, with his four disciples,—Swami Paramananda, Swami Krishnananda Puri, Yogi Narayan and Swarna Giri. Then on, everything went on lightning speed. On 10th of February, 1934, Gurudev got granted the present Ashram site from the Maharaja of Tehri-Garhwal. In the meantime, he also found a Kutir with four 'rooms', dilapidated and disused, which looked like abandoned cow-shed, right on the banks of the Ganga, adjacent to the Ram Ashram. This was occupied at once. Thus within months of his moving out of Swarg Ashram, the Nucleus of the great Mission was firmly founded.

Those were the days when Sri Gurudev used to undertake lightning tours, for lectures and Kirtans. Swami Swaroopananda translated and explained Swamiji's English lectures into Hindi. Swami Atmananda and Swami Ramananda Saraswati also accompanied Swamiji and delivered lectures in Hindi.

As one consciously and constantly aware of his Mission, Sivananda founded the Divine Life Trust Society on the 13th of January, 1936, in a mysterious manner. How this happened, let us see to the narration of Swami Swaroopananda, who wrote, under the title '*Birth of The Divine Life Trust Society*', as follows:

"It was in the first week of January

1936 that the God-intoxicated, Sankirtan Samrat (as he was known then) Swami Sivananda, along with a few disciples,\* was on his way back to "Ananda Kutir," his obscure abode on the bank of the holy Ganges, just after presiding over the All India Sankirtan Sammelan at Lahore (now in Pakistan). The well-known Panjabi devotee of Kasur, who was the Secretary of Sri Krishna Prem Sabha, Bhagat Karam Chand, also accompanied "Siva's" party, by train, on his way to Ambala from Lahore; and lo, the Divine Will worked through him. As the train sped by, he requested the Sankirtan-intoxicated Gurudev to break his journey at Ambala, for the sake of spreading the Name of God there. Sri "Siva" was already very much fatigued, as far as his physical body was concerned, and he was inclined to refuse naturally, but Bhagat Karam Chand insisted hard on Gurudev to get down at Ambala for some rest at least. Now the Divine Will in "Siva" prevailed, and the Sankirtan-intoxicated Swami replied: "Well, arrange for one week's non-stop (Akhand) Sankirtan immediately." Instantly came the reply from Bhagat Karam Chand: "Please get down, and we will have it started this very evening." The God-intoxicated "Siva," ever absorbed and merged in God's Name, then detrained at Ambala Cantonment, with his own little band of disciples.

"The people of Ambala lustily cheered him, for, though having no organisation of his own at that time, he was well known among the devotees of the Lord; and we felt as if the masses had gone mad in divine ecstasy. Then the week-long, non-stop chanting of "Hari Nam" commenced, not by some selected few, but by thousands,

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\* Swami Swaroopananda, the author of this article, was one of them.



both men and women, boys and girls, most of them living on restricted fruit diet during the period.

"The unprecedented, exemplary way of conducting non-stop mass Sankirtan for full one week could not but attract the notice of one and all, not only in the town, but in the whole of Punjab.

"Now, it was in this atmosphere of sacred ecstasy that "Siva" remembered all of a sudden his Postal Cash Certificates of Rs. 5000/-, the interest money of which he was spending in purchasing milk, curd and barley for the ailing, poor Sadhus at Rishikesh. Gurudev wanted to utilise the whole amount in the best possible way to serve the world on a wider scale. He had earlier proved himself quite adamant in acceding to any such request from his disciples to build a Kutir, or start an organisation, or an Ashram for his own use. However, as the Divine Will would have it, at this very moment of non-stop 'Hari Nam' Sankirtan, he instantaneously had a flash, as it were, and took steps to have a Registered Trust constituted at the magistrate's court there. "Siva" wanted to have it done "now or never," a principle which has ever stuck on to his divine life!

"Immediately, the same night, Sri Ram Agarwal, a local lawyer, also a devotee of Gurudev, briefed him about the rules and regulations, and a draft was then and there made. The next morning saw the birth of the Divine Life Trust, at the Ambala Cantonment Court, on the 13th January, 1936, as the legal body of the Divine Life Society."

The Sankirtan Sammelans and lecture tours conducted by Swami Sivananda with his disciples were, henceforth, organised under the auspices of the Divine Life Trust Society. Swami Swaroopananda and Swami

Atmananda were of immense help to Sri Gurudev in these tours; the former even presided over the functions, whenever Swamiji was absent.

The Trust, on its formation, consisted of six Trustees,—five Sannyasins and a householder,—as follows: 1. Swami Sivananda Saraswati, Ananda Kutir, Rishikesh; 2. Swami Swaroopananda Saraswati, Rishikesh; 3. Swami Paramananda Saraswati, Rishikesh; 4. Swami Atmananda Saraswati, Rishikesh; 5. Swami Maheshwarananda Saraswati, Dhaggheta (Muttra); and 6. P.K. Vinayagam—Editor, *My Magazine of India*, Madras.

The aims and objects of the Trust were so noble and the activities of Swamiji so inspiring and transforming and useful that many people from different cities wanted to become members of the Trust. As the membership of the Trust was limited, Swamiji formed the Divine Life Society with four sections—"The Vedantic Society," "The Divine Prem Society," "The Yogic Society," and "The League of Brahmacharis,"—whose membership was free and open to anyone who was eager to have Self-realisation by practising *Ahimsa*, *Satyam* and *Brahmacharya*. Swami Swaroopananda was its First Secretary, with four joint secretaries, for the different sections. Eventually, on the 16th April, 1939, "The Divine Life Society" was registered at Lahore under the Societies Registration Act. Swami Paramananda was elected as the General Secretary to succeed Swami Swaroopananda.

### SIVANANDA PUBLICATION LEAGUE

In the meantime Sri Vaidyanathan (Narayana Swamy) joined the Ashram in 1938. He was another stalwart who worked heart and soul in the publication of Sri Gurudev's works. He and Swami Parama-

nanda were responsible for the printing and publication of Swamiji's earlier writings. Here it would be worth noting how the Sivananda Publication League was formed, a miracle as it were. Extracts from the report about the League published in 'The Divine Life' journal, given below, speak volumes:

"Sri P.K. Vinayagam published a number of Swamiji's books under the general title of "Himalayan Yoga Series", from Madras. They became very popular with thousands of aspirants all over India and abroad. In 1932 Sri Swamiji sent Paramanandaji to Madras to look after the printing work, to assist Sri Vinayagam. Swamiji went ahead with his writing work, and Sri Vinayagam was quick in bringing out one after another several priceless treasure-houses of spiritual wisdom such as *Raja Yoga*, *Inspiring Letters*, *Spiritual Lessons*, *Science of Pranayama*, *Yoga-Asanas*, *Kundalini Yoga*, *Practice of Yoga* (two volumes) and a few other works. All these books have run into several editions in due course. Sri Vinayagam also brought out a book on the experiences of Sri Swamiji's visit to Tibet, entitled *Trip to Kailash*, and another work on the *Life and Teachings* of Sri Swamiji, by Swami Paramananda.

"Similarly, Swami Yoganandaji and Prof. Em Airi of Amritsar, worked together and published a number of books in the "Self-realisation Series", such as *Vedanta in Daily Life*, *Practice of Karma Yoga*, *Practice of Bhakti Yoga*, *Dialogues from Upanishads* and other equally interesting works.

"The third important Publishers of Sivananda-literature were the Gita Press, Gorakhpur. They gave to the readers the largely printed *Mind, Its Mysteries and*

*Control* (in two parts), which at once received a quick and incessant demand.

"And, Messrs. Motilal Banarsi Dass of Lahore brought out Swamiji's *Practical Lessons in Yoga*, which he wrote specially for the sake of his Western students whose number was steadily increasing as his fame spread as a practical exponent of the ancient Yogic lore of India and as a doctor-Yogi who could expound Yoga in a scientific way to the Westerner in a language calculated to appeal to him. The *Daily Herald* of Lahore brought out another excellent work, cherished by all Sadhakas, *How to Get Vairagya*.

"The copyrights of the works of Swamiji were with the publishers of the respective books. This was not considered conducive to the preservation of Swamiji's writings and it was decided to form a Publication League which would consolidate and preserve the publishing rights of all his works.

"The Almighty manifested His Will in the pure heart of Col. A.N. Sharma (later Major-General) in the Indian Army. Col. Sharma wrote to Sri Swamiji, "I gave some money to another spiritual institution several years ago, for the preservation of the writings of a saint. They took up my suggestion, and the institution has grown today into a dynamic centre. Herewith a cheque, I pray that Sri Swamiji's writings, too, should be similarly preserved for all time to come.

"Swami Paramananda, who was also contemplating taking of the very step, took immediate action and established the Sivananda Publication League at the Headquarters of the Divine Life Society, whose first publication was *'Easy Steps to Yoga'*.

"To these two noble souls principally,—Col. Sharma and Swami Paramananda—



and, of course to Sri Swamiji Maharaj's gracious consent—the world owes a deep debt of gratitude.

"A great deal of credit for this rapid publication work must go to the untiring, ever-zealous, selfless service of Sri Narayanaswami, one of the senior most disciples of Sri Swamiji. In a short period of about two years, he printed a number of publications at various presses at Lahore, prominent among which were *All About Hinduism*, *World's Religions*, *Hindu Fasts and Festivals*, *Sayings of Swami Sivananda*, *Health and Long Life*, *Ethical Teachings*, *Lord Siva and His Worship* and *Upanishad Drama*.

"Mention must be made here of Sri Kashiram Gupta of Calcutta, the munificent, philanthropic disciple of Swamiji, through whose initiative and support were brought out the lavishly got-up *Diamond Jubilee Commemoration Volume*. Sri Gupta also printed another highly inspiring and instructive work *Concentration and Meditation*, which was later translated into French. The Allahabad Block Works printed a symposium work, *Philosophy and Teachings of Swami Sivananda*. A number of biographies of Sri Swamiji were also brought out, among which *Sivananda*, *The Perfect Master* by Narayan Swami, and *Siva, The Prophet of the New Age* by Sri A.B.N. Sinha, are worth mentioning.

"All these achievements of the Sivananda Publication League would not have been possible if it had not been for the co-operation of various agencies and individual devotees that have played a great role in catering the works of Swamiji to the public. Among them, special mention must be made of Messrs. My Magazine of India, Madras; Higgenbothams; Swadesamitran; A.H. Wheelers; Sattwic Jeevan Karyalaya, Calcutta; and Sri V.L. Nagaraj of Bangalore.

Our grateful thanks are due to them. The branches of the Divine Life Society have a great part to play in furthering this glorious Cause by coming forward to popularise and publicise the works on Knowledge Divine.

"The General Printing Works Ltd., Calcutta; My Magazine Press, Madras; Mercantile Press of Lahore (now in Delhi); Civil & Military Gazette, Lahore; Upper India Press, Ambala; Allahabad Block Works Ltd., Allahabad; Inland Printing Works, Calcutta; Rajah Power Press, Madras; and Vigyan Press, Rishikesh are among others, deserving of our grateful thanks for bearing the noble task of printing most of these publications, thereby giving a most commendable fillip to the furtherance of the Cause."

The early writings of Swamiji were filled with an unusual fire of renunciation which caught the minds of young students as well as householders. More and more true seekers came to Swamiji, seeking his guidance and protection. By 1940, he had initiated not less than 200 Sannyasins and Brahmacharins in the Nivritti Marga; only a few stayed with him, braving the hard conditions of life in the Ashram.

Something unexpected happened on the 18th of February, 1941. At about 2-00 p.m., Swamiji left the Ashram without the knowledge of anyone. There were hardly a dozen disciples staying in the Ashram at that time, many of them new-comers, and only a few days back Swamiji had sent away to Lahore Swami Paramananda and Narayanaswami on a work which was not really urgent. On receiving the shocking telegram from Sri Nijabodh, about the absence of Swamiji, Paramananda rushed to Rishikesh. In a note he had left, Swamiji said, "I nominate Sri Swami Paramananda, my senior

disciple, as the President of the Divine Life Society.... as he is in close contact with me for several years.... I have to retire immediately for reason of my poor health."

Anyone can imagine the condition of the disciples. But they rose to the occasion and expectation of Sri Swamiji. The disciples at Ananda Kutir set about searching for their Master. Each one went in a different direction,—into the jungles, along the banks of the Ganga, to Haridwar and beyond,—except those who had specific duties to perform.

The announcement, reproduced below, published in the Supplement to the March, 1941 Issue of 'The Divine Life' reveals the stuff of which the disciples were made:

"His Holiness Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. Born in 1887. Served as a Doctor for ten years in Singapore. Returned to India and entered the order of Sri Sankara in 1923. Settled down in Rishikesh for Tapas in seclusion.

"Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj has an unlimited heart of mercy and love. To serve humanity on a large scale in a systematic and organised manner, he established the Divine Life Society in 1936. He turned out tremendous work in various directions for the benefit of the whole world by remaining in a small hut on the banks of the Ganges. He initiated 200 Sannyasins and Brahmacharins in the Nivritti Marga. Every word of his writings is filled with power. Thousands have derived a new life, fresh energy and hopes, inexpressible joy and peace through the Grace, Mercy and Blessings of Sri Swamiji.

"On the memorable day, Tuesday, the 18th February, 1941, Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj retired from the active field of The Divine Life Society work. He has taken to seclusion again either in the deep forests

of the Himalayas or in the plains on the banks of the Holy Ganges. He left Ananda Kutir with a single cloth without any money, without the notice of any one at about 2 p.m. on the 18th February. If anyone is fortunate enough to meet such a magnetic personality, we request him not to disturb Sri Swamiji in any way. But people who happen to meet him may have his Darshan and take care of his body if opportunity arises.

"He has given a definite line for us to work out in the spiritual path. He guided us for a long period. Now he wants to observe how we act our part. No doubt this is a severe test specially when all his students are very young in the spiritual path. By the grace of Swamiji if we make an earnest attempt to carry out his will, we will get sure success in this hard examination. Sri Swamiji Maharaj's love for us is unbounded. He will always dwell with us all. He cannot desert us and deprive us of his Darshan. He cannot injure anyone in any way. When we give satisfaction to the Master, we are sure that He will again give us Darshan in the near future and guide us further in the spiritual path till we reach the goal. It is His duty. He will not fail in any way to do his duty if we carry out his instructions to the very letter.

"Special prayers will be conducted in all places by the members of the Divine Life Society and the disciples of Sri Swamiji and inmates of Ananda Kutir for his good health and his early return. In all Birthday celebrations on 8th September of every year, we hope, Sri Swamiji Maharaj will give Darshan and bless all his devotees."

This announcement is dated 21st February, 1941. This 'Suppliment' also carried an Open Letter to Gurudev signed by 'Admirers, Sannyasins, Brahmacharins, disciples and members of the Divine Life



Society.' A few interesting extracts from it are given below:

"The last letter from Thy Holy Hand is a boon to the whole world because it contains your definite instructions for us to follow. We assure you that we will carry out all your instructions to the very letter. Thy will is strong and powerful. Thy grace and blessings will work wonders. We have strong faith in thy lotus feet. . . . You have guided us all. . . . Every moment of your life had something new for us to learn. . . . The wealth of the whole world is at thy feet. How much happy the world will feel, if we had made nice arrangements for thy comfortable stay in seclusion!

"Now the 'Gita: Part VI', 'Inspiring Songs', 'Philosophy of OM and Mandukya Upanishad', 'Inspiring Messages for All', are all ready and the first copy waits at Ananda Kutir for thy blessings before release. We are certain to get help from all quarters for the quick publication of all your latest writings and one by one all will come out."

Well, Swamiji returned to the Ashram, after a week, on the 24th of February, 1941, to the joy of all his disciples. This disappearance and return were, perhaps, to test the sincerity and strength and spirit of dedication of his disciples; and they did pass the test. Evidently, it was not for rest or poor health, for since Swamiji's return, the activities of the Ashram grew with galloping speed. Construction of the Bhajan Hall was taken up with the help of a committee formed in Calcutta which raised the required funds. The Bhajan Hall was inaugurated on 2nd April, 1942. A series of rooms, called the 'Yoga-Sadhana Kutirs', were also built, in addition to other buildings.

Strangely enough Swami Paramananda resigned from General Secretaryship in

October 1942 and went out for rest, and at the same time Swamiji published, in the October 1942 Issue of "The Divine Life" journal, 'History of the Divine Life Trust Society,' text of which would be of great interest to all.

## HISTORY OF THE DIVINE LIFE TRUST SOCIETY

ANANDA KUTIR, RISHIKESH

"The Divine Life Trust Society was started by me in the year 1936 by a Trust Deed, dated 13th January, 1936, registered at Ambala Cantonment with the aims and objects detailed therein and with the sole purpose of training students in the spiritual path through Bhakti, Yoga and Vedanta and of disseminating the spiritual knowledge far and wide.

"Then finding that many outside people were desirous of joining the Trust Society which consisted then only of six trustees including myself and admitted of no further additions beyond the maximum of eleven trustees fixed by the Trust Deed dated 13th January, 1936, the Divine Life Society, Rishikesh was started by me with the object of propagating the aims and objects of the Divine Life Trust Society far and wide, in India and abroad, and got registered at Lahore on the 16th April, 1939.

"Further, I started the "Divine Life" Magazine as its editor to disseminate the knowledge of Yoga, Bhakti, Karma and Vedanta in 1938. It is the official organ of the Divine Life Society and has got subscribers even in the British Kingdom, the Colonies and in America. On account of increase in work, I authorised disciples of mine living with me in my Ashram to edit it.

"During the past few years I wrote many books on Bhakti, Yoga and Vedanta

etc., including books on other spiritual subjects. My books today number over forty. With the object of reserving the rights of publication, reprint, sales, etc., and to preserve my writings for ever to help the Divine Life Trust Society *financially*, through the proceeds of the sales of the books published, I started the "Sivananda Publication League, Rishikesh" in 1939.

"Thus the Divine Life Society, Rishikesh, the Sivananda Publication League, Rishikesh and the "Divine Life" Magazine are part and parcel of the Divine Life Trust Society mentioned above.

"The work of the above Divine Life Trust Society and its feeder institutions mentioned above is today being carried on by me with the co-operation of my disciples and of the Trustees elected or nominated under the rules of the Trust. These disciples are serving me since the last few years ranging from 2½ to 8 and I have found them indispensable and trustworthy, youngmen who can put into practice my teachings and philosophy, and who on account of their education, intelligence, training under me, and behaviour can carry on the work of the Trust and its feeder institutions to the utter satisfaction of my own self, and of my lay disciples, admirers, patrons of the institutions, friends, donors, well-wishers and others. Seeing their capacity to work for the cause which is next to my heart and their necessity to me especially in my present old age when I am subject to so many physical disabilities and diseases, I have got elected or nominated the following amongst them to be in the Trust as Trustees so that they and other non-trustee disciples of mine and other students whom I may keep with me for the work in future, may have security of living with me and after me also in my Ashram in Munikireti, and that they may

get more impetus to work for my cause till their physical end. The work has so much increased to-day that it demands the co-operation of many workers.

"Names of disciple trustees living in the Ashram on this date:

1. Swami Vishuddhananda
2. Swami Krishnananda
3. Brahmachari Nijabodha
4. Brahmachari Poornabodha

"It is my sincere desire that they should work heart and soul, as they do now, for my cause and disseminate the divine knowledge, according to their individual capacity, far and wide by continuing my work in my absence due to my demise or otherwise, and in full co-operation with the other trustees named below.

"Other trustees living outside my Ashram on this date.

1. Swami Kaivalyananda, Calcutta,
2. Swami Maheswarananda, Brindaban,
3. Brij Biharilal Kapoor, Bareilly,
4. Bala Bux Singhanian, Calcutta,
5. Nagarmal Murmuria, Calcutta,
6. Ramrakshpal Jhunjhumwala, Calcutta.

"Thus the whole trust composed of myself and the above named trustees, has powers to work the Divine Life Trust Society and its feeder institutions even after me, and I have immense faith that all these persons will co-operate to make my work eternally going on. I wish to add in this connection that Swami Kaivalyananda mentioned above is also one of my disciples who works arduously for my cause; Swami Maheshwarananda is another disciple living independently at Brindaban; and that the other Trustees have donated handsome sums now and then or have helped the working of the Trust and its feeder institutions, and for the maintenance of the Ashram. I





The Master with "the Bismarck of the Ashram", Swami Paramananda



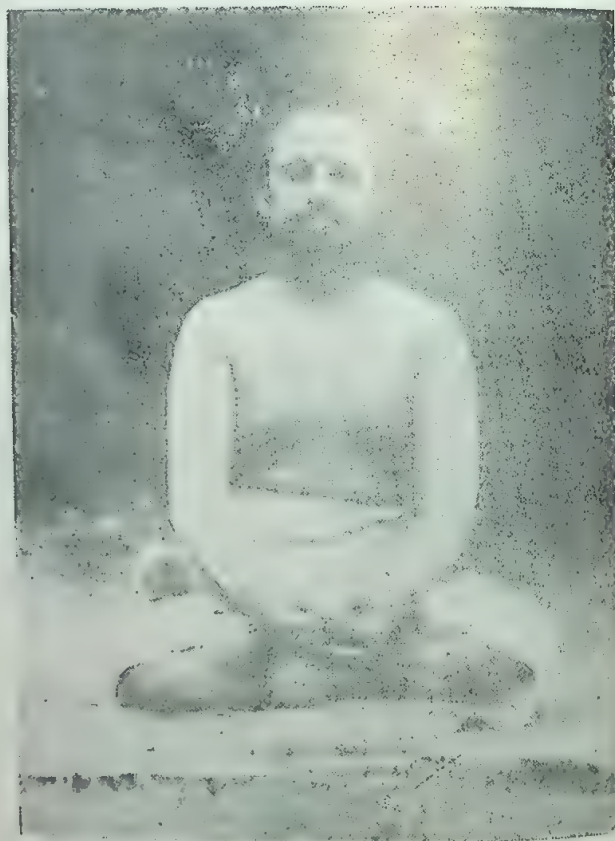
Maj.-Gen. A.N. Sharma



Swami Turiyananda  
and the Master



Swami Narayanananda,  
the author of 'Perfect Master'



Swami Foornabodhendra, "a born Siddha"



Swami Sahajananda, the representative  
of Sri Gurudev in South Africa



have to acknowledge also with deep gratitude and love the untiring services rendered by certain of my disciples in the past like Swamis Paramananda, Swaroopananda, Nirbhayananda, Narayanananda, Atmananda and others, who from the inception of the Divine Life Trust Society rendered their services according to their individual capacity.

"In the cause of dissemination of knowledge, I have written and got published and distributed more than 300 pamphlets, leaflets, etc., and lacs of copies have been distributed free to the public and sent through post. The pamphlets and leaflets have been translated into almost all the languages of India in addition to the Latvian, the Russian, the Bulgarian languages of the West. And I have also written articles to all known Magazines, periodicals, papers, etc., in India and Africa and other foreign countries and they have been similarly translated and published in different languages.

"My priced publications sold by the Sivananda Publication League, Rishikesh, have also been translated and published for sale by outside agencies into Hindi, Canarese, Tamil and the time may not be far off when I may see them translated and sold even in other Indian languages.

"On account of the increase of Ashram work through correspondence, book-packets and other despatches the Postal Authorities of U.P. have been pleased to open an extra-departmental Branch Post Office in the Ashram premises known by the name "Ananda Kutir, Munikireti" B.P.O. keeping one of my own disciples as the Post Master to carry on the work (in addition to the duties which he performs in the Ashram).

"A small allopathic dispensary exists under me since a very long time to treat people of the locality and the neighbouring

villages of the State in ordinary cases of illness or disease, and help pilgrims going to Badri-Kedar, Brahmacharis, householders, Vanaprasthis and Sannyasins of Rishikesh, irrespective of the caste and creed to which they may belong, with free medicines, and sometimes with special diet or monetary aids in exceptionally deserving cases. The number of patients so treated from 1-4-1941 to 31-3-1942 is 1248. I have also trained to an appreciable degree two of my disciples to serve the people with medicine and the work is done by them under my direction, supervision and care.

"I should feel it a pleasure to bring to everyone's notice that the Tehri (Garhwal) State Durbar has been giving its full support from time to time, and that had it not been for the free grant of land sanctioned by the Durbar to house the Divine Life Trust Society and its feeder institutions, there would not have been any place for us all to cover our heads from sun and storm, and rain and ravage, and carry on our activities with added zeal and vigour. Today there stand on this magnificent gift, girt round by the blue rugged mountains of the Himalayas, with the sacred Ganga flowing majestically before, the Bhajan Hall with two adjacent rooms, a Vanaprastha hermitage, a block containing six rooms called Yoga Sadhana Kutir, and a cave—Kaivalya Guha, constructed through voluntary funds raised by the Trust Society from its many sincere followers. I once again take this opportunity of conveying my deep indebtedness to the Durbar and to one and all for the help given to me and my cause and pray humbly that the Durbar would be pleased to extend its gracious and generous hand of support to the Trust Society from time to time.

"The Trust and its feeder institutions have been indebted for their growth to the

numerous admirers, friends, well-wishers, lay disciples, donors, supporters and even pilgrim-visitors. Prominent among them who have given support are H.H. Maharajah Saheb of Sitamau, H.H. Maharani Sahiba of Sitamau, the Maharajah Saheb of Oel, Sri Rajkumar Chaturdev Singhji Bahadur of Poonch State, Lt.-Col. A.N. Sharma, I.M.S., Landsdowne; Dr. Parsuram C. Punjabi, Hyderabad (Sind); Dr. B.G. Dangarwala, Thana; Dr. Sohrab R. Masalavala, Bhopal; Dr. B.A. Vaidya, Nagpur; Dr. Capt. G.S. Chaudhary, I.M.S., Bijnoor; Rai Sahib Dr. Hetram Aggarwal, M.D., Amritsar; Sri Rai Saheb S.C. Ghosh, Calcutta; Sri R.D. Balwal, Calcutta; Messrs. Bala Bux Singhanian, Nagarmal Murmurai and V.L. Sethu Rao, Calcutta; Sri Mizar Govinda Pai, Mangalore; Late B.L. Batra, Jaipur; Sri G.M. Sharma, Nairobi (B.E. Africa); Mrs R. Lal, Calcutta; Sri D.C. Desai I.R.S.E., Aligarh; Sri Dwarkanath Jhingan, M.A., LL.B., Delhi; Sri Chail Bihari Kapoor, Ex. M.L.C., Bareilly; Brij Biharilal Kapoor, Bareilly; Sri Tarachand Aggarwal, Lahore; Sri Guru Datta, Amritsar; Sri Sant Ram Aggarwal, Amritsar; Jai Narayan Kapoor of the Naval Accounts, Bombay; Sri T.P. Gopala Menon, B.A., Hospet; V.V. Erady, Calicut; Raj Rajeswar Sahai, Retired Dt. and Sessions Judge, Muttra; Sri Krishna Kumar, Bareilly; Sri Ganga Saran Avasthi, Agra; Sri Mansukrai More, Calcutta and to a host of other sincere well-wishers whose kind help at every step was a source of inspiration to me to continue the work.

"The Divine Life Society which is the working medium for propaganda of the Divine Life Trust Society and which creates a mass spiritual awakening among the public is an all-embracing and all-including institution. Its objects, ideals and aims are very broad and universal. It does not con-

tradict any of the principles or tenets of any cult or religion. It includes all the fundamental principles of all religions and cults. There are no pet dogmas or sectarian tenets. It leads people to the spiritual path. There are neither secret doctrines nor esoteric sections or inner circles. It is purely a spiritual organisation having no leanings towards politics.

"Sadhana weeks are conducted twice a year during X'mas and Easter Holidays, when many Sadhaks from all over India assemble at Ananda Kutir and receive training in Yogic practices, Nishkamya Seva, Bhakti Marga, Sankirtan, and many other spiritual practices for their special evolution and uplift. Similar Sadhana weeks are also conducted at the Branch centres of the Divine Life Society. In addition to this, many Sadhaks come at other times of the year and after remaining in the Ashram for a few days receive training in all spiritual Sadhanas. Hindu festival days like Krishnashtami, Ramanavami, Sankara Jayanti, Vyasa Puja, etc., are also celebrated at Ananda Kutir and other Branch centres.

"People willingly join the Society and are joining in their hundreds. Branches are opened at several places and people conduct Kirtan, Bhajan, Lectures by great and learned men on spiritual topics, feeding of the poor, Japa, Mantra-writing, spiritual conferences, etc. Its work through regular daily correspondence with the spiritual students outside, review of diaries maintained by aspirants, the Magazine, the books, the free literature, etc., has created an inner urge among all who know of its existence to lead a life in God. It expounds the Yoga of Synthesis in a scientific manner. That is the reason why the Society is receiving support from all corners and has become a world-famous and world-wide institution.



"As shown in the foregoing, I have put in a tremendous lot of hard labour, risking my own health, etc., in the aforesaid Divine Life Trust Society and its feeder Institutions mentioned above and before departing from this physical existence, I take it my duty as a reasonable man to set matters in such a good order that the mission of my life's work for which I have practically sacrificed my very existence, is not extinguished or lost by being allowed to go uncared for or by falling into hands which might be unjust and selfish. I, therefore, release this history of the Divine Life Trust Society clarifying the position of myself, my disciples living with me on this date and the Trustees of the Trust Society."

*Swami Sivananda*

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The great anxiety of Sri Swamiji, as expressed in the last para, regarding the future welfare of his Mission must have touched and awakened the universal forces. More and more able, talented and dedicated souls started pouring in since then and Swamiji opened more and more avenues of service for them. Sri Sridhar Rao (Swami Chidananda), Sri Subbaraya (Swami Krishnananda), Sri Parthasarathi (Swami Venkatesananda), Ramalinga Raju (Swami Dayananda), Padmanabhan and many others joined Sri Gurudev in the years to follow, and each one found an avenue for the expression of his talents and genius. The result was a marvellous expansion in the activities of the Society.

The Akhanda Maha-Mantra Kirtan was started. The Lord Sri Vishwanath Mandir was built and consecrated. The Sivananda Ayurvedic Pharmacy was established. The

All-World Religions' Federation and All-World Sadhus' Federation were constituted. The Yoga Vedanta Forest Academy was started. The Sivananda Art Studio and Yoga Museum were founded. The services of the Sivananda Charitable Dispensary were expanded. All these and many more activities were undertaken, in quick succession. In the meantime, Swami Paramanandaji rejoined the Ashram in 1946 in time to shoulder the great responsibility of organising and celebrating the Sivananda Diamond Jubilee on the 8th September, 1947, which was another milestone in the Master's Mission.

Something dramatic happened on 8th of January, 1950. As the evening Satsanga was in progress in the Bhajan Hall, a half-demented person entered with an axe in hand and started dealing blows on Sri Gurudev. His repeated attempts failed. He was caught and devotees wanted to hand the assailant to the police and punish him. But, to Swami Sivananda, it was 'God coming'. He worshipped him, gave him a feast and sent him home with a lot of books and money. Turning to the devotees, Swami Sivananda said: "The Lord has spared my life because there is some more service to be performed through this body." And the result was the All-India-Ceylon tour which Swamiji undertook for two months from 9th September, 1950 to 8th November, 1950, distributing his message of peace and love to millions through Satsangas, gatherings, public lectures, printed leaflets, radio-talks, etc., etc. The Yatra Mandali that accompanied Swamiji did a yeoman service and deserves all appreciation. It consisted of: 1. Swami Paramananda, 2. Swami Govindananda, 3. Swami Narayananda, 4. Swami Poornabodhendhra, 5. Swami Saswathananda, 6. Swami Chidananda, 7. Swami Venkatesananda, 8. Swami Dayananda, 9. Swami

Satyananda, 10. Swami Omkarananda, 11. Swami Vishnudevananda, 12. Sri Shivaprem, 13. Sri Padmanabhan, and 14. Purushottam.

The All-India tour of Swamiji stired the inner India and awakened the slumbering forces of virtue and godliness in countless souls. The impact of this tour was felt by people in every walk of life,—lay men, students, office-goers, businessmen, intelligentsia, statesmen, etc.,—and many of those who joined the Mission later on were those who happened to attend his meetings or read the literature distributed during the Yatra.

Fired with the spirit of renunciation and inspired by Swamiji's message many experienced and dynamic souls were drawn to the Master,—Sri Karunanidhi (Swami Madhavananda), Dr. K.C. Roy, Dr. Chellamma (Swami Hridayananda Mataji), Swami Jyotirmayananda, who were all stalwarts in different fields of service to the Mission,—and with their joining the Ashram Gurudev gave another boost to the activities of the Mission. He encouraged them, afforded them all the needed facilities for a full expression of their capabilities and aptitudes, and brought out the hidden faculties in them for their own benefit as well as those of others. The Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy Press was started in the Ashram. The Sivananda Eye Hospital was added to the General Hospital, The Sivananda Literature Research Institute was established, The Sivananda Literature Dissemination Committee was formed and various other avenues of service were all instituted. Thus, he made each one shine in a particular direction. There was no stifling or hampering of their longings, in whatever direction they may be, but chanelised them for a noble purpose, that of service to

others as a means of purification of one's heart. The Master made his disciples a small replica of himself, in one respect or the other. This was the genius of the Saint that was Sivananda,—to make the disciples shine like himself.

Even with the wildest of imaginations it would be difficult to believe that the Divine Life Society could have had Branches in India and abroad as early as 1936, i.e., right from the inception, when there were hardly half-a-dozen disciples staying with the Master. In 1936, there were Branches at Monghyr (Bihar), Jangh-Maghia (Punjab), Akidu (A.P.), Ambala City (Punjab), Lahore (Punjab), Mandya (Mysore) and Madras in India, and at Jaffna (Ceylon), Latvija Riga (Europe) and Heidelberg (Germany), in foreign countries. Branches of the Divine Life Society grew in number and strength from year to year; some of them became dynamic centres of spiritual training, like the Headquarters Ashram. Particular mention may be made of the Divine Life Society of South Africa, Durban, under the spiritual-head of Sri Swami Sahajanandaji Maharaj, and the Divine Life Society of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, under the Presidentship of Swami Pranavanandaji Maharaj, who had sub-Branched in the respective countries, and brought out their own monthly journals, for dissemination of knowledge. The Durban Branch has an up-to-date printing press and has brought out reprints of practically all the major works of Sri Gurudev, beautifully printed in superior paper, and flooded the Western world with the Sivananda literature. The Branches and devotees in the other countries have brought out translations of Sri Gurudev's works in German, French, Spanish, Japanese, Russian and Burmese languages, as early as the forties. With a view to making available Sri Gurudev's work in all



Indian languages, the Sivananda Literature Dissemination Committee was formed in 1959, at Rishikesh Headquarters, with Regional Committees for each language, throughout India, which brought out many of the important works of the Master in all Indian languages, simultaneously.

None would have distributed so much spiritual literature throughout the world or deputed so many of his disciples to the different corners of this earth as Swami Sivananda did, by which 'Sivananda' and 'Yoga' became bywords in every nook and corner of the world. And, today, we find his teachings and his disciples even in the remotest corners of the world, bringing joy and solace to many a seeking soul. Glory to Sivananda!

The disciples served the Mission of the Master, like the organs of the body fulfilling the soul's purpose and directive. There was absolute rapport and the disciples felt that the Master's spirit was working through them. It was, as it were, one spirit working through many bodies, towards a single purpose—that of everyone's good and evolution,—expressing itself in some outstanding manner in each disciple. Like a single huge structure that is raised with innumerable bricks and mortar, Sivananda built his Mission with his devout disciples and devotees, and saw its fulfilment in his own lifetime. It is a marvel indeed. He who wanted not to keep disciples by his side or have an Ashram of his own, in the early thirties, should start the Ashram in 1934 and found the Divine Life Society in 1936; he who quietly slipped away from the Ashram in 1941 for taking rest, because of poor health, should soon show so much concern at the Mission's future; he who was attacked to death but escaped unhurt in early 1950, should undertake a very strenuous, sleepless (almost

superhuman) two months' tour around India and Ceylon by the end of the same year and expand his Mission to unimaginable proportions and live to a ripe age of 76 years to see the fulfilment of his Mission before his entering into Mahasamadhi in July 1963—what can be a greater wonder and miracle than this!

Swami Sivananda started the Divine Life Society in 1936, and in early 1941, i.e., within 5 years, when he left the Ashram without anybody's knowledge, for reason of poor health, he had left a note authorising Swami Paramananda as the President to carry on his work. But he returned in a week's time, and soon published the 'History of the Divine Life Trust Society,' in which he expressed his anxiety over the Mission's future. Such a Soul was neither anxious about his Mission nor did he nominate anyone as his successor (though he had the power to do so) when he attained Mahasamadhi two decades later! *He came with a Mission and it was FULFILLED!* He had trained talented disciples, in whom he had confidence that they would carry forward his noble Mission. And they did do it, commendably!! It would be no exaggeration to say that Sivananda, on his attaining Mahasamadhi, has verily entered his disciples, in and through whom he carries on his noble Mission, in a more vigorous manner, even to this day. And, today, when we are celebrating his Birth Centenary, the Mission enters into another era of dynamism, wholly guided by the Master's Divine Will.

Indeed Sivananda is a Miracle-Man, and his disciples, too, are small miracles, in themselves. Wonderful is the Master and wonderful are the disciples. A brief account of the life and contribution of these fortunate souls who served this noble Mission is given elsewhere.

## Stones, Bricks And Mortar

The ways of God are said to be mysterious; and equally mysterious are the ways of saints, sages and Great Masters. Whenever there is an Avatara or descent of the Lord in this phenomenal world, He has a specific purpose and He brings with Him the needed forces for the accomplishment of His purpose. Even so Great Masters are born on this earth, to fulfil the Mission of God, at different times for different purposes, who draw towards themselves the necessary forces in the form of disciples, devotees and well-wishers who contribute to the fulfilment of their purpose. The Masters do so not because they need the help of those forces for their purpose, for they can work single-handed, but to provide the favourable atmosphere for the ripening of evolved souls, while fulfilling their purpose. The purpose of Avataras and Great Masters is never single, but multifaceted and, rather, cosmic. Thus does the Divine work in this creation of His—the transformation of negative forces and, simultaneously, the evolution of positive forces by providing them with the favourable circumstances needed for it. Thus did Swami Sivananda cause the gravitating of exceptionally talented, rare and evolved souls towards himself. These fortunate ones who were drawn towards the Master, like iron filings towards a magnet, formed the stones, the bricks and the mortar of which the beautiful mansion of his Mission was built and completed,—the stones and the boulders which went to make the foundation and supporting pillars; the bricks with which the structure was raised; and the mortar which provided the cementing force that brought shape, beauty and smooth finish to the mansion,—the Divine Light emanating from which illu-

minated the hearts of countless seeking souls around the world. A brief account of the life and contribution of these rare and blessed souls is given below; if we can imbibe a fraction of the spirit of their devotion, dedication and utter selflessness, our lives would become fulfilled.

[It is to be mentioned here that the following is a somewhat chronological documentation of the association of persons with Sri Gurudev and The Divine Life Society Institution, irrespective of their personal status or magnitude of service they have rendered.]

### SWAMI SWAROOPANANDA

Swami Swaroopananda was an elderly person who hailed from Bihar. Swami Paramananda has given a vivid description of how he and Swami Swaroopananda became Swami Sivananda's disciples, in 1932. He says: "I was living with Swami Sivanandaji in Swarg Ashram. We were only three young boys serving Swamiji,—Prakash, Vivekananda and myself. There was a very learned man living nearby; he was well-read in English, Hindi and Sanskrit. I wanted to gather more people around Swami Sivanandaji and so told him that he had done his duty to his family and that he could now take Sannyasa from Swami Sivanandaji. He said, 'If you take Sannyasa, I will also take it'. For his sake I agreed. The next day our decision was conveyed to Swamiji, who arranged for the barber even. Then a clean shave! We were both Sannyasins—Paramananda and Swaroopananda."

While living in Swarg Ashram, Swami Sivananda formed the Swarg Ashram Sadhu Sangha on 24th August 1933, and



the Sadhus elected Swami Sivananda as the President and Swami Swaroopananda the Secretary.

Swami Swaroopananda and one or two other Swamis accompanied Swami Sivananda in his lecture and Kirtan tours. Swaroopananda was a talented Swami, a good orator and a Kirtanist. Swami Sivananda had conferred on him the titles *Vachaspati*, and *Vedanta Kesari*. He translated Swamiji's English speeches into Hindi and explained them to the audience. Apart from that Swami Swaroopananda was personally a devotee of Radha Krishna and he would never miss an occasion to bring this point of Gopi's love for Krishna or the greatness of Lord Krishna, even in the midst of his translation of otherwise a different subject altogether. Whenever Swamiji could not attend a conference, Swami Swaroopananda himself would preside over the conference and ably conduct the entire session, doing Kirtans, delivering speeches, etc., and kept the audience spell-bound. He conducted Sankirtan Sammelans and Conferences in Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, United Provinces, Punjab and Jammu during the years 1933 to 1936.

So able and erudite was he that when Swami Sivananda formed the Divine Life Trust Society in 1936, he not only had Swami Swaroopananda as one of the first Trustees but also nominated him as its first Secretary. It was indeed a great privilege and honour, which bespeak his great abilities and maturity. He was the first General Secretary of the Divine Life Society, from 1936 to 1939. Referring in his services, Swami Sivananda mentions in his 'History of the Divine Life Society,' published in October, 1942: "I have to acknowledge also with deep gratitude and love the untiring services rendered by cer-

tain of my disciples in the past, like Swami Swaroopananda,.....who from the inception of the Divine Life Trust Society rendered their services according to their individual capacity."

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### SWAMI PARAMANANDA

Born on the 15th of February, 1907, in the town of Nagore in South India, as the youngest son of the prosperous Brahmin couple Sri N.Sambamurthy and Smt. Sundarambal, he was known as S. Jayaraman in his *Purvashram*. After his early education in Nagore itself, he served for a short time as a teacher in the local Catholic Mission School. He then went to Madras in 1927 and got employed in the Railways. The young boy, who had an adventurous spirit and an innate urge for renunciation, happened to read Swami Sivananda's first writing 'Practice of Yoga' at the Connemera Library, Madras, in 1929. He started postal correspondence with Swami Sivananda and expressed his wish to renounce the world and join him at Rishikesh. He was, however, advised not to be hasty in giving up his job but to serve the Ramakrishna Mission. But Jayaraman's zeal could not be subdued and he went to Rishikesh to have Swami Sivananda's Darshan in December 1930. Swamiji was, however, not there; he was on a long tour. After a few days' stay at Swarg Ashram, Jayaraman made a bee-line to the Ramakrishna Mission Ashram in Calcutta and became an *attache* to Sriman Mahapurushji Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, one of the first disciples of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. As a disciple of Sri Mahapurushji, he served him with heart and soul and got himself endeared to the Swamiji. On the Mahasamadhi of Mahapurushji, Jayaraman felt impelled to

reach the feet of Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj of Rishikesh and forthwith reached the sacred banks of the Ganga. Swami Sivananda initiated him into the order of Sannyasa, under the monastic name of *Swami Paramananda*, in the year 1932, in Swarg Ashram.

Paramananda joined Sivananda when the latter had really no Ashram of his own, and was taking his Bhiksha from the Annakshetra of Swarg Ashram, living in a neglected, dilapidated hut. Paramananda had naturally to be happy with a rough life bereft of even the normal amenities of one's life. Those were the very hard days of the *Tapas* of Sivananda, when he used to utilise the inside portion of used envelopes or margins of old newspapers thrown on roadside for embodying his immortal message to humanity. This saint of such rigorous self-discipline and austerity, Paramananda served, and served with unabated energy, enthusiasm and tireless fervour.

Swami Paramananda was with Gurudev from his remote Swarg Ashram days and was the pioneering Executive of the Divine Life Society during the days of its inception. He was then the veritable right hand of Sri Gurudev and was the sole in-charge in those difficult days of the spade-work of the Institution which was just gaining ground as the would-be world renowned Organisation.

Swami Paramananda was responsible for the typing, proof-reading, printing and publishing of most of the early writings of Sri Gurudev.

Swami Sivananda sent Paramananda to Madras to assist Mr. P.K. Vinayagam, Editor of the periodical '*My Magazine of India*', in which a page was already being devoted to Swamiji's article 'Precepts for Practice', which Swamiji continued to con-

tribute for more than two decades. Stationed in Madras, Paramananda got published many of Gurudev's works through the good offices of Mr. P.K. Vinayagam.

So hard-working and dedicated was Swami Paramananda that Sri Gurudev took him, as also Sri P.K. Vinayagam, as Trustees of the Divine Life Trust Society on its formation in 1936. Swami Paramananda was also nominated as the joint Secretary of the Society and he, in collaboration with Swami Swaroopananda, did superhuman services to Swami Sivananda and his Mission.

Referring to Swami Paramananda, Swami Venkatesananda writes:

"Matchless Guru-Bhakti (devotion to the Guru), an astounding dynamism, unflinching devotion to the cause he espouses, intense activity in the service of his Master, love and affection towards all who serve the cause, a great love for discipline and an innate capacity to maintain it, and selflessness to the absolute degree, selflessness that perfumes all the other virtues and strikes awe and evokes respect in all—that, in short, was Swami Paramanandaji Maharaj.

"Even a mere catalogue of the services rendered by Paramananda to the divine cause espoused by the Master would fill the pages of a large volume. Suffice it to say that when a holy wish arose in the Cosmic love-lake of Swami Sivananda's heart, it flooded Paramananda's entire being; when a word issued from Swami Sivananda's lips, Paramananda was ready with the response, 'It is done, Swamiji.' Thus were born the Divine Life Society, the Sivananda Publication League, the *Sadhana Weeks*, the Ashram, and the *Divine Life Magazine*, etc."

Such was the Master's confidence in Swami Paramananda's ability and fitness





THE DIVINE FAMILY OF SRI GURUDEV, SOMETIME IN 1955: Gurudev in centre, 2. Swami Paramananda, 3. Swami Chidananda, 4. Swami Krishnananda, 5. Swami Madhavananda, 6. Swami Venkatesananda, 7. Swami Vishnudevananda, 8. Swami Sadananda (Prof.), 9. Swami Jyotirmayananda, 10. Swami Satchidananda, 11. Swami Nadabrahmananda, 12. Swami Jnanananda, 13. Swami Krishna (Kutia), 14. Swami Nirmalananda, 15. Swami Paripoornananda, 16. Sri Purushottam, and 17. Swami Santananda

The Master with his disciples: Old and Young (1953)



Top Row (from left): Swamis Gitananda, Vasudevananda, Narayananda, Hariomananda, Ramanujananda, Mounananda, Gurudev, Sadananda (Prof.), Brahmananda, Sadananda, Satchidananda Ashram, Ranganathananda, and Ramanananda; Bottom Row (from left): Swamis Purushottam, Krishnananda, Omkarananda, Satyananda, Sreenivasananda (sps), Gurudev, Chidananda, Venkatesananda, Satchidananda—I, Raghunathananda, and Satyagyanananda



that when he suddenly disappeared from the Ashram in February, 1941, for rest on account of poor health, he had left a note nominating Swami Paramananda as the President of the Divine Life Society, though he returned after a week's absence.

Swami Paramananda became the second General Secretary of the Divine Life Society from 1939 and did yeoman service till 1942, when came an important turning point in his life. In October 1942, he left the Ashram, with a general letter of introduction from the Master. But his devotion to his Master and his divine mission did not diminish in the very least by leaving the Master's physical presence; he continued to serve the cause wherever he went,—Punjab, Kashmir and Madras—during the next four years.

In 1946 Swami Paramananda came to Rishikesh to have Darshan of Gurudev and the latter asked him to stay at the Ashram. This gave him the golden opportunity to plan and prepare and celebrate Sivananda's Birth Diamond Jubilee in 1947, in an unprecedented manner. In 1950, Swami Paramananda organised the Epochal All-India-Ceylon tour, from 9th September to 8th November, a task which none else could do. It was he, again, who left no stone unturned to see through the success of the 'World-Parliament of Religions' held at the Headquarters of the Society in April, 1953. On 9th January, 1956, he set up the SIVANANDA REGALIA, a marvellous exhibit of memorable articles associated with Gurudev from the earliest of days. While declaring open the 'Regalia', Gurudev paid the following tribute to Swami Paramananda: "Swami Paramananda has got original ideas. It was he who built the Bhajan Hall, collecting donations from people. It was he who started the Publication League. It was he who

organised my All-India Tour. He was responsible for bringing out German and French translations of my books. He wrote to the publishers and induced them to take up the translations. He has spread my knowledge throughout the foreign countries. He is a very hard worker. He works the whole night." On 8th September, 1956 the grand 'Sivananda Mandir' was consecrated, with the beautiful marble statue of the Holy Master, which Paramananda got made from Madras.

Swami Paramananda was often called the 'Bismark of the Ashram', meaning thereby that he was virtually the foundation, the basic structure of the edifice of the Divine Life Society, which he managed to maintain with all its strength and stability, by his sternness, precision and unparelled devotion to Sri Gurudev Swami Sivananda. Many a time, Swami Paramananda used to say that there is no Ashram, there is no Divine Life Society, there is *only* Swami Sivananda; and Gurudev's word was gospel for him.

With many more achievements to his credit, that Great Soul attained Mahasamadhi at 6.30 p.m., on Monday, the 4th of December, 1972, at Sivananda Ashram. Paying his tribute to Swami Paramananda, revered Swami Chidananda said: "He has been to me a great inspiration and an exemplar on the path of true discipleship. To understand what implicit submission to the wishes of the Guru is, to learn what whole-souled dedication to the service of the Guru is, and to know what unswerving loyalty to the mission of the Guru is, you have to humbly observe this illustrious and seniormost disciple of that Great Master, Swami Sivananda."

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### SWAMI ATMANANDA

Born on 18th April 1891 in a Brahmin family on the holy bank of river Narmada in Gujarat, Sri Swami Atmananda was a graduate in Arts and well-versed in Sanskrit language and an expert in vocal music.

After his brief stay in Theosophical Society he came to Omkar Kutir, Maya Kund, Rishikesh, of Mata Omkareshwari at the age of 28 years. Through the inspiration from Mataji and his own quality of dispassion he became the favourite devotee of Swami Sivananda, from whom he got Sannyasa initiation in 1932 and accompanied him in his travels as a *parivrajaka* (wandering monk).

Before establishing the Divine Life Trust Society, Swami Sivananda travelled throughout the western and northern India and visited Lahore, Rawalpindi, Sitapur, Prayaga, Gaya, etc. Swami Atmananda followed Sri Gurudev like a shadow and enchanted people by his devotional songs individually as well as in accompaniment with Swami Sivananda, and helped him in his propagation of the glory of Lord's name.

Swami Atmananda was one of the trustees of the Divine Life Trust Society and its Joint Secretary, from its inception in 1936. His name finds first place in the books by Swami Sivananda and other publications of the Divine Life Society and ranks first in the list of Vedantin Mahatmas and venerable saints and sages of India.

The life of Swami Atmananda was a life of dispassion, free from the allurements of name, glory and pelf, and sublime, noble and divine. To saints his life serves as an inspiration and a beacon-light, especially to youths. He was well-known for his selfless service, love and humaneness.

True to his name *Atmananda*, he was

merged in 'Bliss of Self'. He was an embodiment of austerity and a man of unfailing conviction in simplicity and truth, and was never attracted by the allurements of teaching and preaching. He endeared himself to contemporary saints by his simplicity, child-like nature and inner purity. He was never fond of increasing the circle of his devotees. Ever remaining in his Kutir 'Atma-Niketan', in Maya Kund, Rishikesh, he was established in his Self. Singing the glory of Guru and meditation on Brahman formed his life-mission.

His devotion to the Master and his Institution,—The Divine Life Society,—was so total that not a single important function in the Sivananda Ashram would go unattended by Swami Atmananda, who, in spite of his age, would come all the way from his Kutir in Rishikesh to pay his tributes to Sri Gurudev and deliver such inspired speeches, narrating incidents from his experience with Gurudev in their early days that would thrill the hearts of seeking souls.

Prior to attainment of Mahasamadhi, he was engrossed in transcendental thought, free from the thought of body and mind. The Swami of pious memory attained 'The Eternal' on the midnight of 7th April, 1980.

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### SWAMI GOVINDANANDA

Swami Govindananda hailed from Tamil Nadu and his association with Sri Gurudev was very, very old,—almost from the beginning of the Sivananda Ashram in the mid-thirties. He particularly confined himself to a single form of service to Gurudev, viz., preparation of the daily menu to the Master. This staunch adherence to the principle of seeing that Gurudev is given and provided with all his daily needs, this type of devotion of Swami Govindananda should be



considered as a form of virtual self-surrender. He was fanatic, one could say, in his concentration to see that all the needs of Gurudev for his physical maintenance were provided with. Incidentally, Swami Govindananda was an expert cook. Swami Chidananda used to say, "Even if he fries some dry leaves and gives you, it will be very tasty to eat." That is the magic touch of the hands of Swami Govindananda in this art. His expertness in cooking and his one-pointed devotion to see that the Master's physical needs are properly taken care of, earned for him the privilege of accompanying Sri Gurudev in his All-India tour in 1950, for the sole purpose of seeing to Swamiji's diet and welfare.

His adamant attitude towards the welfare of Sri Gurudev many a time wrongly earned him a name of 'over-strict man' who would not care for the welfare of other people, but would be working through blinkers, as it were, thinking only of what is going to take place in the Kutir of Gurudev. But nevertheless, Swami Govindananda was one of the dear associates of Sri Gurudev, and one whom no one can ever forget to keep in one's mind. He left his mortal coil in the Sivananda Ashram on the 31st of August, 1986 and merged himself in his Master.

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### SWAMI VISHUDDHANANDA

Swami Vishuddhananda hailed from Tamil Nadu. He joined the Ashram sometime in 1936. He was one of the Joint Secretaries of the Divine Life Society from the year 1938 and he took over as General Secretary of the Divine Life Society after Swami Krishnananda-I left the Ashram, sometime in 1944, though for a short time. He was a very silent man; he will not speak

at all. Swami Vishuddhananda never spoke and never uttered any word and so most people never even knew that he was the General Secretary of the Ashram because there was no indication in his behaviour that he was such. All the work was done by the other people like Swami Nijabodhananda, Swami Poornabodhendra, Swami Narayananda, etc., but in principle Swami Vishuddhananda was General Secretary. He was a devout follower of Sri Gurudev. Later on, he took an active interest in the formation of the Vishwanath Bagh, in Rishikesh, and we may not be far from truth if we say that virtually he was the founder of this complex called the Sri Vishwanath Bagh,—a piece of land that was obtained on lease from the Bharat Mandir organisation. Sri Vishwanath Bagh later on became the Goshala of the Ashram.

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### SWAMI NIJABODHANANDA

Swami Nijabodhananda hailed from Tamil Nadu. He joined Swami Sivananda sometime in the year 1936 and he was also one of the Joint Secretaries of the Society from 1938. In 1941 he became the Secretary of the Society and he took over as the General Secretary from Swami Vishuddhananda sometime in 1944, in which capacity he served till December, 1948.

Swami Nijabodhananda was also something like Swami Poornabodhendra in strictness of management of finance, and was a very reticent person something like Swami Vishuddhananda himself. But he had a very peculiar characteristic of devotion to the ritualistic side of religion which he began to emphasise later in greater and greater intensity. The form which the intensity of his ritualistic devotion took later was firstly

a rigorous routine that he kept everyday, i.e., to chant the holy Rudra (Namaka-Chamaka) in chorus eleven times, daily, in the Sri Vishwanath Mandir of the Ashram with Abhisheka performed. This was a *must* for him, which became a rigid routine in following days, a Sadhana which he introduced with a pious intention of stabilising the Ashram's future and for assuring divine grace coming through Lord Vishwanath, who is the presiding deity of the Ashram. Further on, he took interest in Tantric Sadhana and he used to lock himself up for a larger part of the day giving the minimum of time for managerial work, which of course he did not neglect in spite of his personal Sadhana. He was initiated during the later days of his stay here by one specialist in Tantra from Kodaganallur, Tamil Nadu, which initiation got him absorbed into the line to such an extent that it became difficult for him to continue as a managing chief of the Ashram, due to which he had to retire and find a place of worship and meditation and Sadhana for him in Varanasi where he settled down sometime in 1949.

### SWAMI POORNABODHENDRA

Swami Poornabodhendra was born in 1912 in Sivagiri village, Tirunelveli Distt, Tamil Nadu. He had his education in the Hindu High School, Sri Villiputtur. He joined the Divine Life Society in 1937, when the institution had just been founded, and was initiated into the order of Brahmacharya in the same year. Since then he served under various important capacities and substantially contributed towards the furtherance of the sacred Divine Mission of Swami Sivananda. Swami Poornabodhendra entered the Avadhuta Order of Sannyasa on Sivaratri in 1947, having been initiated by

the late Swami Sankaranandaji Maharaj of Sendamangalam.

Swami Poornabodhendra was a short person who gave heart and soul to the work of Sri Gurudev. He was not interested in study, reading, writing or any kind of literary activity. He was a hard worker, almost to the manual type, and going to the extent of even doing labourer's work, digging the earth and helping in even building construction work during those days of difficulty in getting large number of labourers from the locality. But principally, Swami Poornabodhendra was connected with the maintenance of account in a small post office which the Ashram had, known as Ananda Kutir Post Office, which was then a Branch Post Office, but connected with the Rishikesh Post Office, to which everyday the post is to be sent, through some messenger who used to carry the bags. Apart from the maintenance of the accounts of the Branch Post Office, he was also a virtual Accountant, why virtual, he was *the* Accountant, who maintained the Ledger of the income and expenditures of the Ashram, a very meticulous calculator of financial aspects of management of the Ashram. The economy of the Ashram was very safe in his hands, a very hard alround worker who lived and died for Sri Gurudev. Those days there were four Swamis who used to be considered by Sri Gurudev himself as the pillars of the Divine Life Society, viz., Swami Vishudhananda, Swami Nijabodhananda, Swami Narayananda and Swami Poornabodhendra. These were the four strong pillars on which the structure of the Divine Life Society stood, and was expected to stand even in the future forthcoming years. One of the chief architects of the Divine Life Society and an illustrious follower of Swami Sivananda, Swami Poornabodhendra attained *Mahasamadhi*, after a brief illness,



—due to an unhappy incident; an accident that took place,—at mid-noon on 22nd January, 1956 at Kasauli, near Simla. His mortal remains were brought to Sivananda Ashram, and on the morning of 25th January, after the last honours had been paid, were consigned to the swift flowing sacred Ganga, to the chanting of Veda Mantras and Kirtans sung in chorus. His passing away was a great loss to the Ashram,—a loss which no one can forget.

As the entire Ashram paid homage to the memory of this great renunciate who was yet a very hard-working and most ideal Karma Yogin dedicated to the service of the Divine Life Society, Swami Sivananda, in a brief but moving speech, observed:

"It is a great loss to the Divine Life Society and the world also. He was a great Mahapurusha, a ray of Dattatreya. I have never seen him in an unpleasant mood, not even once during the last eighteen years. He has never asked me anything. He would be satisfied with whatever he would get in the kitchen. Even if he had no cloth, he would keep quiet. He always lived above body-consciousness. I used to ask him, 'Where is your sweater? It is very cold.' He never cared for his body.

"He used to bring Kaveri water for worship and service of his Guru, Avadhuta Brahmendra Saraswati Swami Sankaranandaji Maharaj, at Sendamangalam (in South India). For that he had to bicycle thirty to forty miles daily. Such a great soul I have never seen in this Ashram. It is a great loss to me. He was doing the work of nearly twenty persons here. He was most trustworthy, most sincere and hard working. Any work was Yoga for him. He was a born Yogi, Siddha and saint and he has now merged in the Supreme Light of

Brahman. He does not want our prayers. Yet, to show our reverence to him, we have to do it. He is an example to saints, Yogins and Sannyasins. So, let us pray for his Peace, and draw inspiration from his noble life—stainless, unequalled, unparalleled life."

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### SWAMI NARAYANANANDA

Born at Trichur in Kerala on 16th September, 1915, to the highly religious parents, Sri K.N.V. Iyer and Smt. Locambal, he was named as Vaidyanathan. The deep austerity and piety of his father's life made an indelible impression on the boy, Vaidyanathan. Even in his childhood, he developed great faith in God and the habit of earnest prayer. He passed the Higher Secondary Examination in 1931 and successfully undertook an intense study of a commercial course in 1932. Simultaneously, the study of *Srimad Bhagavad-Gita*, *Bhagavata* and *Krishna-Bhakti* claimed his heart. He was a votary of Lord Narayana of the renowned shrine, Guruvayur, in Kerala. He first came to know of Sri Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, in the year 1932, through the latter's spiritual teachings in the columns of the *'My Magazine of India.'* Mysteriously enough, in the very next year (1933) a great devotee of Lord Krishna of Guruvayur advised the young Bhakta, Vaidyanathan, to go to Rishikesh and to meet Swami Sivananda there. "Rishikesh is the best place for Sadhana," said this great devotee. In the year 1938 the opportunity presented itself while he was living with his elder brother who was at Kharagpur (near Calcutta) at that time as a Railway Officer. The earnest young seeker reached Ananda Kutir, on the banks of the Ganga, on the 4th January, 1938. Recogn-

nising his spiritual worth, Sri Gurudev initiated him into the holy order of *Brahmacharya* on 20th January, 1938, and gave him the *Diksha Name*, Narayana Chaitanya. Perceiving his holiness and purity, Gurudev allowed him the privilege of doing personal service to him. He entrusted Sri Narayan with important work connected with *Jnana-Yajna*.

Gurudev gave him the important work of typing of the hand-written manuscript of his spiritual writings. Sri Narayan thus became filled with the teachings of Gurudev's thrilling spiritual *Upadesa*. He also undertook the work of editing these manuscripts and getting them printed at Lahore or Calcutta, correcting the proofs and supervising the entire publishing work. He was unsparing in his dedicated labour in service of Guru Maharaj. And to all acts of service he gave a spiritual touch. It was combined with prayer and the attitude of worship. All work was sacred to him. He did such worshipful work with absolute selflessness but at the same time with the keenest interest. Swami Narayan always insisted that Nishkama-Karma Yoga and Seva meant selfless service, not without interest, but with keen interest, earnestness and genuine sincerity. He faced great danger and even the risk of death during the Hindu-Muslim riot in 1946-47 when he was in Lahore supervising the intense publication work at the Mercantile Press there. With city in flames all around him and with violence and murder let loose everywhere, he stuck to his duty and by miracle he managed to bring away safely valuable spiritual books of Gurudev. He renounced even the blessing of Gurudev's company and the holy Ganga to go and stay at the General Printing Works at Calcutta to reprint numerous precious out-of-print works of Guru Maharaj. On his 40th Birthday,

he took Sannyasa (on 16th September 1954), when Gurudev initiated him into the holy Monastic Order, and named him Swami Narayananda Saraswati.

Swami Narayananda was a most illustrious disciple of Sri Gurudev. He was the repository of many noble virtues. He was a monk of great renunciation, a deep spirit of *Vairagya* and exceptional *Virakti*. His devotion to his great Guru was unparalleled. Sri Gurudev's service was the very life and soul to Swami Narayananda. He lived only to serve Gurudev. He endeared himself very greatly to worshipful Gurudev by his total dedication to his Mission, by his absolute selflessness, his purity of conduct, humility and self-effacement. He shone as a silent saint amongst the Sivananda Ashram Monastic Brotherhood. Worshipful Guru Maharaj had very great affection for Swami Narayananda and looked after him with great care and solicitude, richly deserved by the latter's noble character and sterling spiritual quality.

His devotion should be underlined as something unparalleled, utter devotion being its nature, characteristic of the ancient type of Guru-disciple relationship. Though he was not actually connected with the Management of the Ashram, he was later on made the Vice-President of the Divine Life Society, by Sri Gurudev himself, because of his saintly nature. He was a very active, manual worker also at the same time like Swami Poornabodhendra, not minding physical hardship, even doing work of digging, constructing, white washing, etc. He was a very good soul who wrote a beautiful, touching and realistic biography of Sri Gurudev known as '*Perfect Master*' which should be considered even today as a model of the utterly real facets and faces of Gurudev's life as he observed those days.



Swami Narāyanananda was a great votary of the Tulasi Ramayana,—the Ramacharita Manas,—and did regular Parayana of this holy scripture as his Svadhyaya, to which he practically devoted all his time. He contributed many serials to the Society's monthly journal, *The Divine Life*, translating and commenting on some of the well-known Sanskrit works, like the *Guru-Gita*, *Vivekachudamani*, etc., some of which have been published in book-form.

Gurudev once declared, referring to Swami Narayananda, "He is simplicity itself. His is the scriptural ideal of a *Paramahansa*. He never likes to wear costly dress. Renunciation of selfishness and egoism,—this is the secret of renunciation and this is the *Tyaga* that Sri Narayan Swamiji possesses. The world is in need of more such saints. Follow his footsteps and shine as becon lights."

After Gurudev's passing in 1963, Swami Narayananda felt more and more an intense desire for a life of solitude and inwardness. Thus, in 1965, he went to Naimisharanya and thence to Varanasi. The spiritual attraction of this sacred city of Lord Vishwanath captivated him and he took up residence in a simple little room in the Kedareshwar Temple. He lived a life of intense spiritual quest and *Tapasya*.

Since 1970, an unsuspected nervous and heart condition manifested itself and told upon his health. Swami Nijabodhananda, his Gurubhai, as also Dr. S. Nath, a great devotee of the place, were both of constant immense help and service to Swami Narayananda throughout. He gradually became confined to his room and his immediate neighbourhood. But his inner spiritual consciousness and serenity was never affected by the physical ailment. He kept up his supreme spirit of Vedanta unto

the very last,—Sunday, the 17th of September, 1972, when he attained Mahasamadhi, in the sacred city of Varanasi. Everyone has to remember him for his goodness and nobility.

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### SWAMI VISHWESHWARANANDA

Swami Vishweshwarananda came in the prime of his life to offer himself as a disciple at the feet of Sri Gurudev. For nearly twelve years and more, between 1938 and 1950, he served Gurudev wholeheartedly and received his Grace. He was an expert in Yoga practice and at the same time a forceful speaker and also a vigorous Sankirtanist. He was a dynamic Karma Yogi during his early years at the Ashram, and he was one of those who used to carry the Ashram's bulky mail bags to the Rishikesh Post Office, daily, which was not an easy job in the forties when there was not even a regular road to Rishikesh. Later he became an ardent devotee (Bhakta) of Lord Badrinarayana Bhagavan. He spent several months every year at the holy Badrinarayan Dham. He gave up all other forms of Yoga and took to Hari Nama Sankirtan. By his life and forceful admonitions he inspired numerous aspirants towards the spiritual life. He was one of the close disciples of Gurudev's early circle of followers.

After 1950, he settled down in Jhandiyala village, near Amritsar, where devotees built an Ashram for him. He was very much revered by the devotees of Punjab where he was known as Sri Jivanmukta Maharaj and his Ashram as Jivanmukt Ashram. He used to visit the Sivananda Ashram, with his devotees from Punjab, to pay his respects to Sri Gurudev, now and then. This Mahapurusha attained Maha-

samadhi a few hours after midnight of Monday, 14th April, 1980.

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### SWAMI KAIVALYANANDA

Swami Kaivalyananda hailed from Tamil Nadu. He was not very nearly and particularly associated with Sri Gurudev as the other Swamis were, but he was a great protagonist of the publication-section of the Divine Life Society during the late thirties and up to mid forties. He stationed himself in Calcutta, from where many of the early publications of the Ashram were sponsored by him from expert printing presses there, the cost of printing of books being arranged by him through contact with devotees in Bengal. But after sometime he established a sort of independent publication centre in Calcutta which he designated as SP League, though this term was originally a description of the publication section of the Headquarters Ashram, viz., Sivananda Publication League. Later on Swami Kaivalyananda, though retaining this term SP League, interpreted it as Saraswati Publication League, to make a departure of a kind of independence that he asserted, though with good intentions. Anyway Swami Kaivalyananda also is one of the stalwarts whose contributions to the work of Society were immense in their own way. All things said and done he is one of the earliest cooperative forces of Sri Gurudev's Ashram, who in addition to publication of many books also arranged for the recordings of the speeches and songs of Sri Gurudev on the Gramophone.

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### SWAMI KRISHNANANDA-I

Swami Krishnananda-I (not the present General Secretary, who is Swami Krishnananda-II) hailed from Konkana Desa (Karnataka State). He joined the Ashram sometime in 1940. He was an able and efficient person, in addition to his being a sincere Sadhaka. A man of principles and strictness, he was dear to Sri Gurudev and was made the Chairman of the Birthday Celebration Committee even in the year of his joining the Ashram. Later on, when Swami Paramananda resigned from his General Secretaryship and left the Ashram in October, 1942, it was this Swami Krishnananda who was made the General Secretary of the Society as also the Editor of the Society's journal 'The Divine Life' from October, 1942, both which he continued till May, 1944, when he decided to leave the Ashram for seclusion and Sadhana.

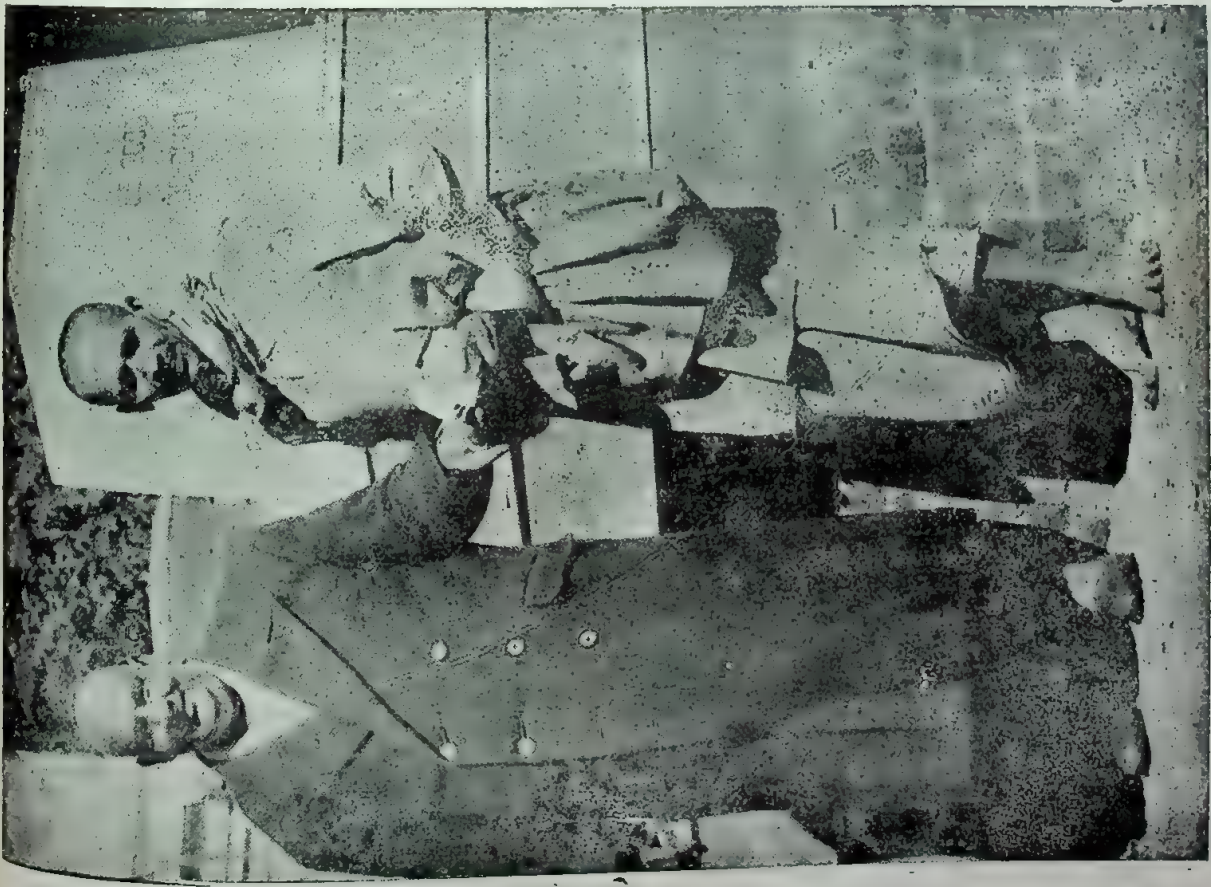
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### SWAMI CHIDANANDA

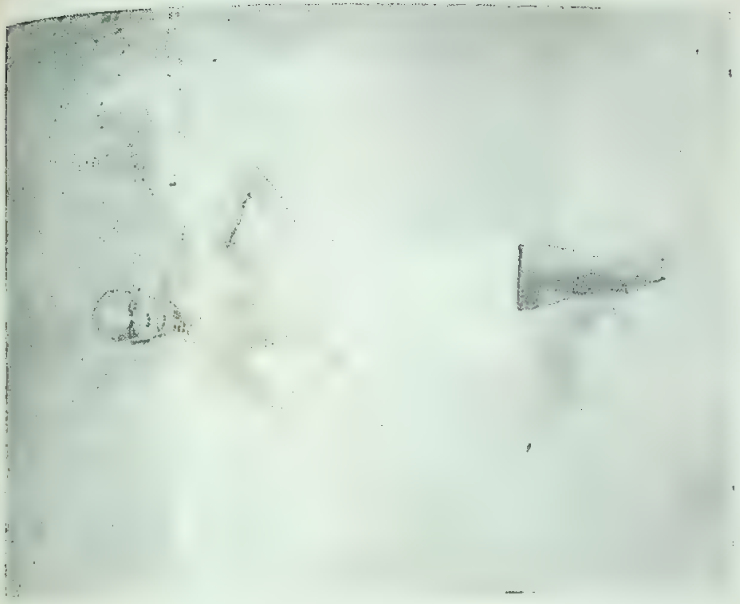
Sridhar Rao, as Swami Chidananda was known before taking Sannyasa, was born to Srinivasa Rao and Sarojini on 24th September, 1916, the second of five children and the eldest son. Srinivasa Rao was a prosperous Zamindar owning several villages, extensive lands and palatial buildings in South India. Sarojini was an ideal Indian mother, noted for her saintliness.

At the age of eight his life was influenced by one Anantayya, a friend of his grandfather, who used to relate to him stories from the epics, Ramayana and Mahabharata. Doing Tapas, becoming a Rishi, and having a vision of the Lord became ideals which he cherished.

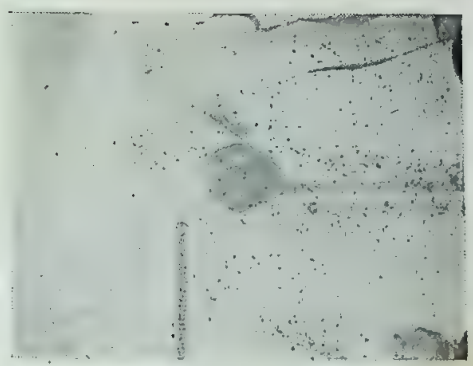




H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj,  
 "The Prince among Sannyasins"



Swami Govindananda



Swami  
 Vishweshwarananda  
 (Jivanmukta Swami)



Swami Shivapremananda  
on the day of his Sannyasa initiation



Swami Venkatesananda,  
"the tower of strength to Sri Gurudev and His Mission"



His elementary education began at Mangalore. In 1932 he joined the Muthiah Chetty School in Madras where he distinguished himself as a brilliant student. His cheerful personality, exemplary conduct and extraordinary traits earned for him a distinct place in the hearts of all teachers and students with whom he came into contact.

In 1936 he was admitted to Loyola College, Madras, whose portals admit only the most brilliant among students. In 1938, he emerged with the degree of Bachelor of Arts. This period of studentship at a predominantly Christian College was significant. The glorious ideal of Lord Jesus, the Apostles and the other Christian saints had found in his heart a synthesis with all that is best and noble in the Hindu Culture. To him study of the Bible was no more routine; it was the living of God; just as living and real as the words of the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita.

The family was noted for its high code of conduct and this was infused into his life. Charity and service were the glorious ingrained virtues of the members of the family. These virtues found an embodiment in Sridhar Rao. He discovered ways and means of manifesting them. None who sought his help was sent away without it. He gave freely to the needy. Service to lepers became his ideal. He would build them huts on the vast lawns of his home and look after them as though they were deities.

Service, especially of the sick, often brought out the fact that he had no idea of his own separate existence as an individual. It seemed as if his body clung loosely to a soul which had fully awakened to the realisation that It dwelt in all.

He was an ardent admirer of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. He visited the Math at Madras regularly and partici-

pated in the service there. Swami Vivekananda's call for renunciation resounded within his pure heart. He ever thirsted for the Darshana of saints and Sadhus visiting the metropolis.

In June, 1936, Sridhar disappeared from home and after a vigorous search by his parents, he was found in the secluded Ashram of a holy sage some miles from the sacred mountain-shrine of Tirupathy. He returned home after some persuasion. The temporary separation was but a preparation for the final parting from the world of attachments to family, friends and possessions.

The final decision came in 1943. He was already in correspondence with Sri Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh. He obtained Swamiji's permission to join the Ashram.

He arrived at the holy Ashram of Sri Gurudev during the summer of 1943 and Gurudev recognised at once his abilities as a literary genius capable of expressing himself in chaste English style, with a capacity to present himself in a most balanced manner. The recognition of this characteristic of this new entrant made Gurudev immediately entrust him with correspondence work,—writing of essays, literature, articles etc., for publication through the columns of the journal of the Society as well as other publications. In addition to his literary capacity and an outstanding speaker and writer among the inmates of the Ashram, he was also specialised in medical aid due to his natural aptitude for this line of service. And so in addition to the work of literary contribution to the Ashram, he was entrusted with the work of the dispensary (Swami Sivananda Charitable dispensary), of which he was the sole incharge—doctor, nurse, attendant, all combined. He was a non-interfering person, never concerned him-

self with the Ashram's managerial affairs or anything whatsoever except writing, speaking in the Satsanga whenever Gurudev requested him to do so and doing medical service, of an exceptionally valuable nature. People in the locality used to know him more as a medical servant than as a literary genius or as a writer or speaker. The goodness of his heart earned him great fame, and he became a very reputed person in the entire locality.

When the Yoga Vedanta Forest Academy was established in 1948, Gurudev paid him a fitting tribute by appointing him as Vice-Chancellor and Professor of Raja Yoga. During the first year he inspired the students with his brilliant exposition of Maharshi Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras*.

It was also in the first year of his stay at the Ashram that he wrote his *magnum opus*—“*Light Fountain*”, an immortal biography of Swami Sivananda of which Gurudev once remarked “Sivananda will pass away, but ‘Light Fountain’ will live.”

In spite of his multifarious activities and intense Sadhana, he founded, under the guidance of Gurudev, the Yoga Museum in 1947, in which the entire philosophy of Vedanta and all the processes of Yoga Sadhana were depicted in the form of pictures and illustrations.

Towards the end of 1948, when Swami Nijabodhananda retired from the post of General Secretary of the Divine Life Society, Gurudev nominated Sridhar Rao as the successor. The great responsibility of the organisation of the Society now fell on his shoulders. From this moment he spiritualised all its activities by his presence, counsel and wise leadership. He exhorted all to raise their consciousness to the level of the Divine.

On Guru Purnima day, 10th July, 1949, Sridhar Rao was initiated into the holy order of Sannyasa by Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, and was named as Swami Chidananda—a name which connotes “One who is in the highest consciousness and bliss”.

Apart from his distinction as an able organiser of Divine Life Society Branches in several parts of India, his contribution to the success of the epochal All-India Tour of Gurudev in 1950 is memorable. Together they attracted to the Divine Life Movement great political and social leaders in India, high-ranking Government officials and rulers of Indian states.

Swami Sivanandaji described him: “A prince among Sannyasins, the divine aroma of my Mission and the rhythm in my work.” Again Sri Gurudev spoke high of this great soul thus: “He infuses bliss in everyone who comes into contact with him. He is very fond of the name of the Lord, and has realised its nectarine sweetness. You must see him serve the sick. He sees Lord Narayana in every sick person. Humility, tolerance, simplicity, devotion and respect to the Order of Sannyasa and to his Guru, and many other divine virtues have their abode in him. He has a facile pen; as an orator he has the gift of bringing home to the listeners the sublime ideas he propounds.”

In November, 1959 Swami Chidananda embarked on an extensive tour of America, being sent by Gurudev as his personal representative to radiate the message of Divine Life in the New World. He was hailed by the Americans as the Yogi of India very well-fitted to interpret Indian Yoga to the Occidental mind. He also toured South America and preached in Montevideo and Buenos Aires, etc. From America he made a quick tour of Europe, returning to the Ashram in March 1962.



In April 1962 he set out on a pilgrimage to South India where he visited temples and other holy places and delivered soul-stirring lectures. He returned from South in early July 1963, about ten days before the Mahasamadhi of Sri Gurudev, a fact which he described as nothing short of a miracle.

In August 1963, he was elected by the Board of Trustees as President of the Divine Life Society, which position he occupies till this day. Subsequently his tours became more extensive, intense and powerful, the consequence of which is to be seen in the form of the wide spread expansion of the Divine Life activities, both at the Headquarters and the Branches of the Divine Life Society in India and abroad.

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### SWAMI KRISHNANANDA-II

Born as the eldest son of a family of six children, on the 25th of April, 1922, he was named as Subbaraya. He was born in a highly religious and orthodox Brahmin family, well-versed in the Sanskrit language, the influence of which was very profound on the young boy. He had his High School education at Puttur (South Kanara Dist, Karnataka State) and stood first in the class in all the subjects. Not being satisfied with what was taught in the class-room, he took to earnest self-study of Sanskrit with the aid of Amara-Kosa and other scriptural texts. He studied and got by heart the entire Bhagavad Gita when he was still a boy, and he had a simple way of doing it, that of not taking his morning breakfast or even lunch unless he memorised a prescribed number of verses, every day. Thus within months he memorised the whole of the Gita and recited it, in full, everyday. Such was his eagerness

to study scriptures. Reading from the Srimad Bhagavata that Lord Narayana *lives* in the sacred Badrinath Dham, the young boy literally believed it and entertained a secret pious wish to go to the Himalayas where Badrinath is and see the Lord there.

By the study of Sanskrit works like the Gita, the Upanishads, etc, he was rooted more and more in the Advaita philosophy of Sankaracharya, though he belonged to the traditional Madhva-sect which follows the dualistic philosophy. His inner longing for Advaitic experience and renunciation was growing strong everyday. In 1943, Subbaraya took up Government service at Hospet in Bellary District, which however did not last long. Before the end of the same year, he left for Varanasi and there he studied the Vedas and other scriptures. But the longing for seclusion and the unknown call from the Master pulled him to Rishikesh, where he arrived in the summer of 1944. When he met Swami Sivananda and fell prostrate before him, the saint said: "Stay here till death; I will make kings and ministers fall at your feet." The young man who wondered within himself how could this ever happen at all, now realises the prophecy of the saint's statement. Swami Sivananda initiated this young Subbaraya into the holy order of Sannyasa on the sacred day of Makara-Sankranti, the 14th of January, 1946, and he was named as Swami Krishnananda.

Sri Gurudev found that he was suitable in his eyes to do works of correspondence, letter writing, writing messages and even doing some assistance work in compiling books, editing them, etc. Later on he was given the work of putting into type-written form the hand-written manuscripts of Sri Gurudev which he used to bring to him everyday. For instance, the entire two vo-

lumes of the Brahma Sutras of Sri Gurudev, which he wrote in his hand-writing was type-written by Swami Krishnananda. He confined himself mostly to the literary side and never used to have any kind of relation with visitors so that people who came from outside never knew that he existed in the Ashram. It was in the year 1948 that Gurudev asked him to do more work, along the lines of writing books on Philosophy and religion which he took up with earnestness. It could be safely said that from that year onwards, he was more absorbed in writing and conducting classes, holding lectures, etc., as per instruction of Sri Gurudev. The first book he wrote, *'The Realisation of the Absolute'* in a matter of mere 14 days, is still the best of his, atonce terse, direct and stimulating.

When it became necessary for the Ashram to co-opt assistance from other members in the work of management, Swami Krishnananda was asked to collaborate with the Working Committee which was formed in the year 1957 and at that time it was that he received a position of Secretary, especially concerned with the management of finance which work he continued till about the year 1961, when, due to the absence for a protracted period of Swami Chidananda, Gurudev nominated him as General Secretary of the Divine Life Society which position he is associated with till today. It can very safely be recorded that in the history of the Divine Life Society none ever held, nor is likely to hold, that responsible and taxing position of General Secretary for more than a quarter of a Century.

It may be recorded to his credit, without the fear of the least exaggeration, that it is Swami Krishnananda, the genius and master of scriptures, who alone has expounded practically all the major scriptures of

Vedanta in the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy of the Society, in the early morning sessions, afternoon classes and the regular three-month courses, most of which have been brought out in book-form—authentic commentaries covering the philosophy, psychology and practice of the various disciplines of Yoga. He is thus the author of nearly twenty works, each one a masterpiece in itself. This, a genius of his calibre only could do, in the midst of his enormous day-to-day volume of work as the General Secretary of a vast Institution. He is a rare blend of Karma and Jnana Yogas, a living example of the Gita-teaching.

Such was his literary skill and understanding of the entire gamut of the works of Sivananda numbering about three hundred that he was made the President of the Sivananda Literature Research Institute, by Sri Gurudev himself, when the Institute was formed on 8th September, 1958. Again it was Swami Krishnananda who was appointed as the President of the Sivananda Literature Dissemination Committee, which was formed to bring out translations of Sri Gurudev's works in the major Indian languages, simultaneously. When Swami Shrivapremananda was deputed to the States, Swami Krishnananda was made the Editor of the Society's official monthly organ, *'The Divine Life'* from September 1961, which he did efficiently for nearly two decades.

He is a master of practically every system of Indian thought and Western philosophy. "Many Sankaras are rolled into one Krishnananda," said Sri Gurudev, in a cryptic statement, which he himself has amplified in his article *'I Marvel at Krishnanandaji'*.

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### SWAMI SHIVAPREMANANDA

Sri Sukhendu Ray (Sri Shivaprem), as a young man, came to the Ashram from Calcutta in January, 1945, and like others got involved in the correspondence work of the Ashram directly under Sri Gurudev. He became proficient gradually in writing essays, contributing articles to journal and the like, due to the specialisation which he had for some years under Sri Gurudev. He became the Editor of the Society's monthly journal 'The Divine Life', since January 1949. He did this work with great sincerity, love and affection, in addition to serving in the different departments of the Headquarters. He has also been editing the monthly journal for the members of the Divine Life Society, *Wisdom-Light*, since its inception in January 1949.

Reticent, withdrawn and shy of publicity, Sri Shivaprem was not known to many as an able interpreter of comprehensive spiritual thought and a talented writer that he is. He has edited many of the publications of Gurudev, such as *Parliament of Religions: Commemoration Volume*; *Wisdom of Siva*; *Practice of Nature Cure*; *Religious Education*; *Every Man's Yoga*—to mention a few. He is also the author of *Maharshi Sivananda*.

Acquainted with all the facets of religion and aspects of Yoga, amiable in disposition and capable of being at-home with everyone, widely informed and liberal in outlook, Sri Shivaprem was considered well-suited by Sri Gurudev to propound the message of the East to the West, when there was an invitation from a devotee in Milwaukee (Wisconsin) in the United States of America. Sri Gurudev was also confident that his impact on the spiritual seekers in America (or wherever he would go) was bound to influence an inner awakening.

Thus, in August 1961 Sri Gurudev gave him Sannyasa, named him Swami Shivapremananda and deputed him as a mouth-piece of his Mission in the West, which orders of Sri Gurudev he obeyed implicitly and left the Ashram for this noble work in September, 1961, for the States visiting some European countries and Canada *en route*.

From 1961 to 1964, Swami Shivapremananda was the founder-president of the Sivananda Yoga-Vedanta Centre in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. From 1964 to 1970, he was the director and prime mover of the Sivananda Yoga-Vedanta Centre in New York City. He has travelled extensively in the U.S.A., giving lectures in the universities and conducting seminars on Yoga and Vedanta. In the course of the years, Swami Shivapremananda has established three great totally independent spiritual Centres of India's spiritual culture and educational and public service in three South American countries,—*Argentina*, in Buenos Aires; *Uruguay*, in Montevideo; and *Chile*, in Santiago. Though these three are his main Centres, where he stays for two months at a time in each Centre giving regular programmes, he also tours extensively in U.S.A. and Europe.

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### SWAMI HARISHARANANANDA

Born on the 5th of March 1902, the auspicious day of Mahasivaratri, in Rewari (Haryana), he was named as Shivanarayan. He belonged to a wealthy family and had good education. He was well-versed in Hindi, Urdu and English, as also in Sanskrit. He joined his father, Sri Ganpat Ram, in his business but lead an ideal householder's life, full of selflessness, kindness, piety and self-sacrifice. Those days

he was staying in Montgomery, in the then undivided Punjab, where he came in contact with a great devotee of Sri Gurudev, Sri Chaman Lal Sharma. Seth Shivanarayan felt the magnetic pull of the saint Sivananda so much, though he had only heard about him from Sri Sharma, that in September, 1945, he renounced his family and took refuge at the feet of Swami Sivananda, visiting Mathura, Brindavan and Barsana (places sacred to Bhagavan Sri Krishna and Radha) on the way.

The characteristic of Sri Shivanarayan is austerity and a wholesouled dedication to the study of Srimad Bhagavata Mahapurana and Ramacharita Manasa, to the reading of which he devoted his time entirely. It was difficult for us to say how many times he read the Srimad Bhagavata and Tulasi Ramayana though originally he intended to complete 108 readings as a personal Sadhana. He was a very great favourite of Gurudev especially because of his humorous, catching stories which he used to narrate during the evening Satsanga of the Ashram, which in those days was held in the verandah of the Ramashram Building, as the Ashram itself had no suitable place. He was made the chief operator of the Satsanga during those days, the whole Satsanga being nothing but narration of tales and stories of spiritual importance and significance by him. On the completion of his fiftieth year of age, Sri Shivanarayan was initiated into the order of Sannyasa on the day of Mahasivaratri in 1952 and given the befitting name of Swami Harisharanananda, by Sri Gurudev. He was full of devotion, both to God and Guru, recognising which Swami Sivananda honoured him with the title "Bhakta Siromani" in 1955.

Everyday Swami Harisharanananda used to go to the other side of the Ganga

at 6 O'Clock early morning to attend the Gita lectures of revered Jayadayal Goyankaji of Gita Press and of Ramsukhdasji Maharaj who used to conduct Pravachana everyday under a Peepal tree on the bank of the Ganga beyond what today is the Veda Niketan. Swami Harisharanananda later on took up some part of the management of the Ashram in the year 1957 as one of the collaborators in its work when it became difficult for a single person to manage. After some years of intense Tapas, devotion and hardwork along the lines of direct management in the Ashram, he retired and settled down in Barsana, district of Mathura and spent his whole life till the end in complete devotion and meditation, especially a Purascharana and Tapas of the type of devotion to Radha and Bhagavan Sri Krishna.

He attained Mahasamadhi very recently, on the 3rd of April, 1987, and merged in Sri Radha whose holy Name he was ever chanting, singing and meditating. He had the great good fortune of having his long-cherished pious wish fulfilled—that of merging his body into the very dust of Barsana (Brij-Raj),—which was done by revered Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj himself.

\* \* \*

### SWAMI VENKATESANANDA

Parthasarathy (as Swami Venkatesananda was called before he entered the holy order of Sannyasa) was born to the pious and noble parents, Sri Srinivasan and Srimati Lakshmi Devi, in a village called Koil Venni in Tanjore District, South India, on 29th December 1921. Many incidents happened in his childhood and boyhood which reveal his inborn divine qualities. The boy's mind began to turn to devotion and love towards Lord Venkatesa of the famous shrine of Holy Tirupati. When



Parthasarathy was a boy of twelve years, he came across books written by Swami Sivananda who was destined to become his spiritual Master and Living God. In course of time Parthasarathy held a responsible position at Delhi as a personal assistant to a highly influential Secretary to the Government of India. But the call of the spirit was irresistible. His contact with Swami Sivananda through books had developed into contact through frequent letters. Then it flowered into regular visits to the holy Ananda Kutir, whenever Parthasarathy managed to get leave from his office duties. The personal contact with the Master soon overwhelmed Parthasarathy and he cut off all bonds that bound him to the secular life, renounced a promising career and offered himself as a dedicated Sevak at the lotus-feet of his Divine Master Swami Sivananda.

Coming thus into the spiritual fold of Swami Sivananda at a very young age, Parthasarathy took to the renunciate life in the year 1945 when he resigned the excellent position he was holding. He came with the specific intention of placing himself entirely at the service of Gurudev's Universal Spiritual Mission, with intense devotion, utter dedication and unparalleled spirit of service. He soon made himself indispensable to worshipful Gurudev, especially, in his global spiritual dissemination work. From early 1945 up to the time when he breathed his last his entire life was whole-souled absorption in the sublime good work of Gurudev Swami Sivananda. Parthasarathy was ordained as a monk on 8th of September, 1947, the sacred Diamond Jubilee of Sri Gurudev. He became Swami Venkatesananda.

The Swami was a versatile personality. He placed his great talent in the service of the holy Master. He was one of the pillars of the Divine Life spiritual movement. At a certain period he was the very

right hand of worshipful Gurudev. Such was the great confidence reposed on him by worshipful Gurudev, that every morning, when Gurudev stepped out of his little cottage on the banks of the holy Ganga, he would first go directly to Swami Venkatesananda's room situated right in front and sitting there, he would many a time consult him and seek his opinion on matters concerning Jnana Yajna and publishing activities of the Society and at times on other important matters as well.

He was a tower of strength to Sri Gurudev during the latter's unique "ALL INDIA SPIRITUAL AWAKENING TOUR OF 1950" which had electrified the entire nation and powerfully stirred up the spiritual consciousness of millions of people creating a wave of religious awakening and inspiration throughout the country. Gurudev declared about Swami Venkatesananda: "He is the Crest-Jewel of my Mission. He is the resplendence of my work. Will I see anyone else shine brighter than him! Surely none have I seen so far. He is a tower of strength to me and my Mission." During the tour he took down notes of every word spoken by Sri Gurudev at each centre and has brought out a voluminous work "*Sivananda's Lectures: All India Tour.*"

He came especially to work vigorously in the correspondence section of the Ashram. One can say that volumes of typewritten material connected with correspondence is to be turned out, even during night hours by this Swami. The entire career of his in the Ashram was devoted to writing, recording of Gurudev's speeches and editing the day-to-day messages and conversations of Gurudev which he did to the point of perfection and perhaps most of the *Sivananda: Day-to-Days* that we have these days recorded are the works of Swami Venkatesananda, principally. After tireless service and winklessly working in the

Ashram for Sri Gurudev's glory, his main mission was to bring glory around the aura of Gurudev's Centre, The Divine Life Society, which task he fulfilled very commendably. He has produced a superb work entitled "*Gurudev Sivananda*" which is not merely a detailed biography of Swami Sivananda but also an authentic record of the history of the Divine Life Society,—a reference book involving great labour.

The Indian devotees in South Africa, headed by Swami Sahajanandaji Maharaj, required a powerful spirit of the Divine Life Society to enthuse them and Swami Venkatesananda was the man chosen by Sri Gurudev for the fulfilment of this Mission there. Thus in 1961 Swami Venkatesananda was deputed to South Africa, where he did a marvellous work. Reports came from there that Swami Venkatesananda shook the whole of South Africa and he hoisted the banner of Sri Gurudev's Mission. After working there for some years, he moved to other countries—Mauritius, Madagaskar, and some countries in Europe,—and later on to the East, particularly to Australia. Most of his later days were spent in South Africa only, where again he did vigorous literary work, writing and compiling excellent text books on philosophy, Yoga and scriptures. He produced more than fifty books covering a wide range of subjects pertaining to philosophy, religion, metaphysics, ethics, self-development, spiritual Sadhana, the different Yoga paths, Gurudev's special teachings, comparative religion, psychology and the different scriptures like the Ramayana, Srimad Bhagavata Purana, Yoga Vasishtha, the Gita, the Devi Mahatmya, etc., the very latest volume being a compilation of the teachings of Lord Buddha, entitled "*Buddha Daily Readings*." No other single disciple of worshipful Gurudev has made such an admirable, substantial contribution on such

a scale to the great Master's world-wide spiritual ministry of present-day mankind. The crowning glory of his contribution was the spade-work he made and the manuscript he prepared of the "*Complete Work of Swami Sivananda*" in 18 volumes, of which 6 volumes have been printed under the auspices of the Birth Centenary Celebrations by the Divine Life Society, Freemantle Branch of Australia.

A scholar without ostentation, a writer without pedantry and a speaker without idiosyncrasies, Swami Venkatesananda has made himself lovable and valuable to all. As an exponent of Yoga, as an Organiser of Bhajan Group, as an inaugurator and promoter of a Society Branch, as an editor and prolific writer of many books, as a versatile genius, he always carried distinction in serving the cause of the Society in many countries of the world.

The great saintly soul passed away on the 2nd of December, 1982 at the Sivananda School of Yoga, Johannesburg, South Africa. In the special services offered at the Rishikesh Ashram, Swami Chidananda paid the following tribute to him: "I offer my homage to the sacred memory of our departed brother Revered and Worshipful Sri Swami Venkatesanandaji Maharaj whom his own pre-monastic, earthly, physical mother used to regard as a younger brother of Chidananda—like Rama and Lakshmana. He was an unparalleled and versatile genius, Chronicler-Editor. I pay my reverential homage and my most loving prostrations and adorations to one who had become in many ways an integral part of this Ashram, a part of our very lives and, as such, he is within the hearts of all those who have been closely moving with him, and in the hearts of all of us enshrined as an inseparable part of our inner being. He had the rare capacity of endearing himself to everyone, to children, to his equals, to



the venerable old and to everyone. He is the universal being. He was in harmony with all. The part that he had played in the Jnana Yajna work or the dissemination of spiritual knowledge by teaching and preaching the spiritual culture of India, the knowledge of Vedanta and the science of Yoga to the people all over the world, is something unequalled. He was a tower of strength to Gurudev and one of the greatest contributors in his World Awakening Mission, both from the Ashram and later throughout the world after Gurudev's physical passing."

### SWAMI SADANANDA (Prof.)

Sri C.V. Narayana Iyer was a professor of History in the Presidency College, Madras. He was an associate of a very famous historian called Sri Neelakantha Sastri who wrote a standard work on South Indian History. Sri Narayana Iyer wrote a masterly book on '*History of Saiva Siddhanta*', published by the University of Madras, which made him very famous in that field of research.

It so happened that after his retirement, sometime in 1945 he felt an urge to come on a Yatra or pilgrimage to North and he happened to be at the abode of Sri Gurudev. He came with the intention to stay only for a few days but felt the impact of the atmosphere so much that he did not want to return. Sri Gurudev accepted him as one of the inmates of the Ashram, and gave him Sannyasa in December, 1949 and he became Swami Sadananda. People used to call him Prof. Sadananda. He was a very eloquent intellectual, an able speaker and a powerful writer, and he made large contributions to Sri Gurudev's work

in the publications and editing section. He was associated with the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, as a Gita Professor, for a brief period in 1955. His capacity to preach made Sri Gurudev feel that he may be sent for a while to places outside India to do this kind of work of preaching. Accordingly Sri Gurudev deputed him as a representative of the Ashram to Malaysia in 1956 where he went and delivered lectures on Divine Life. His short stay in Malaysia, though it was not a very long one, of course, produced the great impact and evidently he was a pioneer in creating a Divine Life atmosphere in Malaysia. The flair for Divine Life and Gurudev's teachings, which he brought about in the circle of devotees there, became responsible later on to establish a nucleus of the Divine Life Society as a Branch in Kuala Lumpur headed by revered Sri Ponnaiah (later Swami Pranavanandaji Maharaj).

Swami Sadananda came back to the Ashram and again continued vigorously his intellectual and academic work in the publication section of the Divine Life Society. He conducted regular classes under the auspices of the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy of which he was the professor of Raja Yoga. Two of his great contributions are a series of his lectures on *Narada Bhakti Sutras* and Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras*. His lectures on *Narada Bhakti Sutras* have come out in print, as one of the publications of the Divine Life Society but evidently the other lectures were not ready for print and they are not still known to the world. He also distinguished himself through his essays on Sri Swami Sivananda's *Sivananda Gita*\*. He was also the compiler of the first elaborate volume on the *Philosophy and Teachings of Swami Sivananda*. He was well-known to the readers of the So-

\* Text of the *Sivananda Gita* is printed on page 5

ciety's journal 'The Divine Life' as a regular contributor. He lived in the Ashram continuously as an ardent and loving participant in the work of Sri Gurudev till the end of his life. He attained Mahasamadhi in the holy Brahmamuhurta on Sunday, the 15th of March, 1959, at the age of 69 years.

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### SWAMI SANKARANANDA

Swami Sankarananda was born in Karnataka on the 13th May, 1900. He was a versatile genius. It is extremely rare nowadays to find one who so beautifully blends in himself the scholar and the Sevak, for whom cooking or scavenging, building construction or administration of an institution and thinking and writing on subtle philosophical subjects, would all be natural and therefore dear.

Sankarananda was a linguist and has utilised his mastery of Bengali literature to interpret Tagore's works to the people of Karnataka. He has also translated several of Swami Sivanandaji's works into the Canarese language.

Since he joined the Sivananda Ashram in 1946 he has not spared himself in the service of the Master. Swami Sivananda initiated him into the Holy Order of Sannyasa on "Sankara Jayanti day" 1948. Since then Sankarananda has served the Master's Cause with a rare zeal and spirit of dedication.

He has distinguished himself in several departments of the Ashram. The Society's Garden at Rishikesh owes its growth to him.

Side by side, he has carried on his literary activities. At the invitation of the Mysore University, he delivered a series of lectures on Bangali Literature. At the

Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy, too, he delivered a series of lectures on the spiritual significance of the Mahabharata, which have been brought together in a volume entitled "*The Glorious Journey*".

His talks and writings share the nature of his life itself; they are all thought-provoking.

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### SWAMI MOUNANANDA

Known as Sri R.V. Sastri in his pre-Sannyasa days, Swami Mounananda was a veteran hailing from Tamil Nadu. He was, we should safely say, one of the very able men our country has produced and he had many capacities, unique in their nature. He was, in his pre-Sannyasa days, a friendly comrade of several dignitaries of India in the fields of literature, music and law. He was a constructive critic and a specialised man in these branches of knowledge, and the name of Sri R.V. Sastri was not unknown to adepts in these circles. He had also the privilege of working as legal adviser in several important offices and for a considerable period he was an assistant to Mahatma Gandhi in editing his '*Harijan*'.

In his retired days he settled down in the Sivanandashram. On 10th of July 1949 he was initiated into the holy order of Sannyasa by Gurudev and was known as Swami Mounananda. Gurudev was particularly kind and sympathetic to the Swami, held him in good esteem and made him the Vice-President of the Divine Life Society, a very honoured position. True to his name, he will never speak much, never interfered with anybody. He was a literary and a sort of official and legal adviser to Sri Gurudev, for he was himself a legal expert apart from his proficiency in Music and literary fields. He was a very venerable



man highly respected by Gurudev himself so much so that always Gurudev used to give him a seat by his own side at the Satsanga. A friend, philosopher and guide, we should say, that was Swami Mounananda who lived in the Ashram till ripe old age, until his passing on the 5th of April, 1969.

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### SWAMI PREMANANDA-I

Known as Sivaram, he hailed from Kerala. He was inspired by Gurudev's spiritual teachings while serving in the Tata Industries at Jamshedpur. Urged by the spiritual call he resigned his job and came away to Sivanandashram in the mid forties and immediately became an ardent and devoted disciple of Gurudev. Swami Premananda was a very thin, weak-bodied person and never interfered with anything in the Ashram. He used to sit always inside a little dark room in the old kitchen of the Ashram near the Ganga. He was, therefore, called by people 'Swami Premananda of inside kitchen'. When he came to the Ashram he was given the work of type-writing, i.e., assisting in the correspondence section of the Ashram. Later he was deputed for receiving the daily post, opening the *dak* and presenting it to Gurudev for his perusal every day in the evening.

He was a very active associate of Swami Krishnananda—II in taking down notes of manuscripts of works, which he used to do diligently in a peculiar kind of shorthand which he alone could decipher. He used to write shorthand in type-writer itself, a peculiar system which he devised with his unique intelligence. He never ate food; practically he lived on tea, a dark type of tea which he liked very much, and minded his own business, as it were.

Swami Premananda was a silent Sadhaka who kept his inner Sadhana strictly a hidden matter between himself and the Lord. He was a monk of very simple habits and very few wants. After Gurudev's passing, he desired to live by himself. Thus for some years he shifted to the Society's Garden Sri Viswanath Bagh at Rishikesh. From there he went to live at Ramnagar for some time, finally settling down near Bhimgoda, by the side of Haridwar. He led a silent and solitary life, seldom mixing with others. He was an embodiment of contentment and desirelessness. He passed away after a few days of ill-health on Thursday, 6th March, 1980.

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### SWAMI SHARADANANDA

Sri Padmanabhan came to the abode of Sri Gurudev sometime in the mid forties when he was a Brahmachari of very young age. Active in temperament, adventurous in spirit, and curious about knowing almost everything which he regarded as helpful for furthering the Mission of Sri Gurudev, Padmanabhan worked hard in the development of the photo-studio in the Ashram with such rapidity and success that he quickly earned a name in the locality as a photographer and artist endowed with a novel ingenuity. The various photoprints of Sri Gurudev that are available at present and the photographs of the Ashram are all the work of his pioneering effort. Padmanabhan accompanied Sri Gurudev during his All-India-Ceylon Tour and did an extraordinary job of making still and Movie-films of the entire tour. His skill is something superb. Sri Gurudev ordained him into the order of Sannyasa on Mahasivaratri, the 3rd of March, 1954, and gave him the name of Swami Sharadananda. After

that he worked more vigorously and produced some movie-films of 8 mm and 16 mm size, one of which was a sound-film executed with great labour.

Swami Sharadananda, at the same time, was of an intensely studious type and was vigorously devoted to the study of such scriptures as the Srimad-Bhagavata and the Mahabharata. Later on, in the year 1957, he was inspired by a desire to go into seclusion and settled himself for a short time at Uttarkashi and then permanently in Gangottari, the snow-capped heights in the Himalayas. It was there that he took to a serious study of the Bhagavadgita with the famous commentary of Shankarananda and betook himself to intense forms of *Tapas* in many ways. His fame, as an austere Sannyasin, spread so wide that he spontaneously endeared himself to everyone in the Garhwal regions around Gangottari and among the Sadhus and Sadhakas living there.

He was, unfortunately, affected with a serious illness and was brought down to the Ashram's hospital, where he passed away in peace on the 13th of November, 1979.

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### SWAMI DAYANANDA

Born in Bhimavaram, Andhra Pradesh, in the year 1923 to prosperous parents, he was known as Ramalinga Raju. Even when he was studying in college, he was interested in the literary side, particularly philosophy and religion, and he was an admirer of Dr. Radhakrishnan, especially. Suddenly he felt an urge to renounce the world and found himself at the feet of Swami Sivananda, in the year 1946. Reading, doing Japa and meditation were his specialities. Swami Sivananda recognised the

great spirit of renunciation in the young man and initiated him into the holy order of Sannyasa within two years of his joining the Ashram, on 14th January, 1948 and gave him the monastic name of Swami Dayananda. He accompanied Sri Gurudev during the All-India tour in 1950 and did untiring service to him, day and night, with great love and care.

Swami Dayananda is known as the active participant in the work of The Divine Life Society from the time Sri Gurudev felt it necessary to have a wing of the Ashram helping in printing work. The very seed of the Printing Press, it may be said, was sown by Swami Dayananda. Over night he worked a miracle, as it were, and brought a printing machine (a tradle machine) from Rishikesh town and saw to it that the very next day (20th September, 1951) the inauguration of the Printing Press so dear to Sri Gurudev was performed. He also worked and struggled tooth and nail to bring electricity to the Ashram, which he succeeded in bringing, a few years after the founding of the Printing Press. Actually the manner in which he brought electricity to the Ashram is an epic, a saga by itself. No person would have succeeded easily in doing that work, since it required permission from the Government which was not eager to spend money, for the sake of bringing connection to the Ashram. Anyhow by moving the District Magistrate of Dehra Dun, Swami Dayananda succeeded in doing this work. Thereafter he concentrated himself entirely on the Printing Department, even till today. Due to his persistent and tenacious concentration on this work the Press has increased its dimension. It has become one of the top-most Printing plants in the Garhwal region, which is all due to his indefatigable work and totally unselfish labour. Sri Gurudev loved him

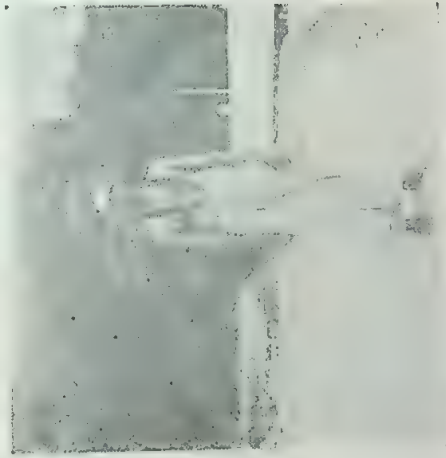




Standing behind Sri Gurudev are (from left) Swami Saradananda, Swami Madhavananda, Swami Venkatesananda and Swami Vidyananda



Swami Dayananda, "an embodiment of Nishkama Seva."



Swami Shuddhananda

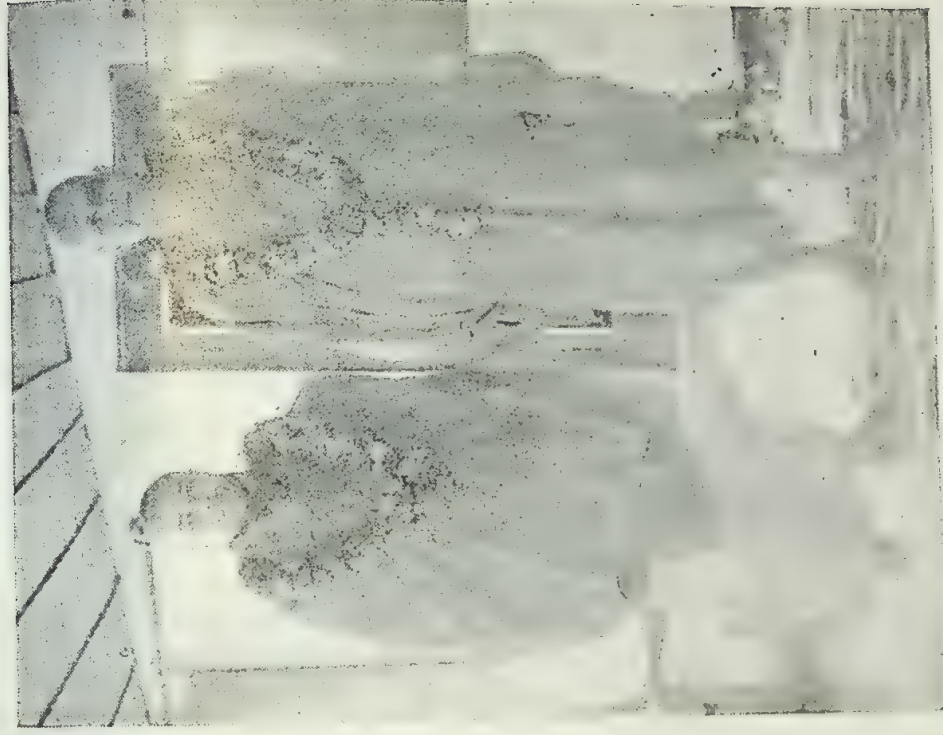


Illustrious Disciples around the Master (seated in the centre)  
 (For details see opposite page)

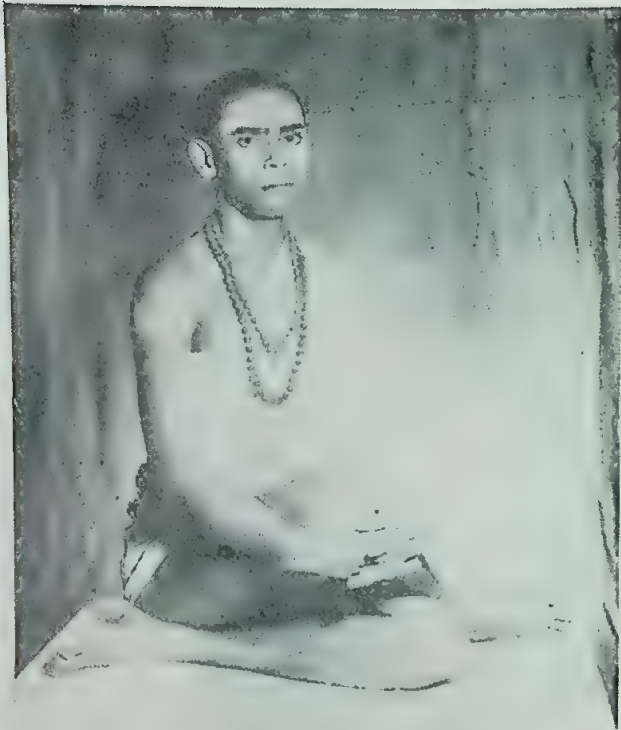


# NAMES OF SWAMIS APPEARING ON THE OPPOSITE PAGE

1. Swami Chidananda
2. Swami Krishnananda
3. Swami Govindananda
4. Swami Purnabodhendra
5. Swami Hariomananda
6. Swami Satyananda
7. Swami Premananda—I
8. Swami Harisharananda
9. Swami Vishnudevananda
10. Swami Raghavananda
11. Swami Mounananda
12. Sri Kandaswami
13. Swami Chaitanyananda
14. Swami Saswathananda
15. Swami Shivapremananda
16. Swami Sreenivasananda (SPS)
17. Swami Kalyanananda
18. Swami Brahmananda—I
19. Swami Sadananda (Prof.)
20. Swami Brahmananda—II
21. Swami Ramprem
22. Swami Kailasananda
23. Swami Narayananda
24. Swami Madhavananda
25. Swami Saradananda
26. Swami Ramananda
27. Swami Satchidananda
28. Swami Omkaranda
29. Swami Raghunathananda
30. Sri Purushottam
31. Swami Dayananda



Swami Nadabrahmananda, the modern Tansen



Swami Vishnudevananda,  
Master of Hatha Yoga



Sri Furushottam,  
the personal attendant of Sri Gurudev



Sri Ranganathan,  
the Bazar Master



Swami Chinmayananda,  
Gita Exponent



so much that once he said, "Ah! I am proud of you, Swami Dayananda," and added, "You are an embodiment of Nishkama Seva." Today, he is the main-spring behind the management of the Printing Press. Swami Chidananda paid his tribute thus: "Swami Dayanandaji Maharaj has been a pillar of this Institution over these decades. Today he is a 'Veetaragi', a 'Nirlipta', 'Tyagi' Saint. He is a rare Sadhu who in the midst of intense Guruseva is yet ever engaged in trying to abide constantly in the state of 'Atma-samsthiti'. He is also 'Iccha Rahita' Yogi in the sense that he has no personal self-desire of any sort in his life. He has one overwhelming desire and that is Sri Gurudev's Jnana Yajna. Other than his desire to meditate, meditate, meditate, his only second ambition in life is to see each and everyone of Holy Master Sivananda's books in print and to make them available to thirsting spiritual aspirants all over the world."

In the year 1970, Swami Dayananda was appointed as one of the Secretaries of the Divine Life Society, in which post he continued till September, 1975 when he was elected by the Board of Trustees as a member of the Trust Board and Treasurer of the Divine Life Society, which position he is holding till today.

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### SWAMI SASWATHANANDA

Swami Saswathananda hailed from Kerala. He was a young vigorous person when he joined the Ashram in the mid forties. He did all kinds of service like a P.R.O., as we call people of that kind these days,—a handy person who used to be sent to various places like Delhi, Dehradun and even Lucknow where he was deputed for certain important works. A very good soul

and a large-hearted person, he was very fond of giving, giving, giving. If he began serving food in the Pangath, he will pour things on the leaves telling, "take, take, eat, eat," and used to serve people with great love. This habit of giving was his special characteristic.

Swami Saswathananda was the distinguished editor of the Yoga Vedanta Forest Academy Weekly. The Society owes a deep debt of gratitude to him for his invaluable services to the cause of dissemination of spiritual knowledge. Swami Saswathananda was a member of the Yatra Mandali that accompanied Sri Gurudev in the All-India tour of 1950. This ever-active, dynamic disciple of the Master was always busy in the service of Sri Gurudev and of the divine cause. His winning manners and loving demeanour captivated the heart of all he met. His Sankirtan and personal spiritual talks inspired many, during the tour.

Swami Saswathananda was an embodiment of love, sacrifice, service, adaptability and devotion to duty. He was also an adept in Hatha Yoga and was the first professor in the Department of Hatha Yoga in the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy.

He had directly no connection with the management of the Ashram but later on he did associate himself with a little bit of management sometimes in the year 1955 or so, though for a short time. He was a very able public relations man due to his capacity to present himself in an affectionate manner. He lived his absorbed life in this manner until he left the Ashram later on, for an unknown destination.

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### SWAMI OMKARANANDA

Swami Omkarananda hails from Andhra Pradesh, he was born in Hyderabad on the 25th of December, 1929. He came to the

Ashram as a small boy 17 years of age in the year 1946 and Sri Gurudev immediately entrusted him with the work of type-writing, copying and editing. He had an insatiable desire for reading books which desire of his he fulfilled by pouring over tomes throughout the night with a little chimney lamp during those days when electricity was not in the Ashram and had almost a passion to become a literary specialist in the English language which wish of his was partially fulfilled to the satisfaction of Sri Gurudev himself. He was entrusted with the management of the Ashram's Printing Press in the year 1953, in which capacity he worked for about an year. Later on like a devil he worked day and night without taking rest, taking only tea, in which work Sri Narasimhulu of the Ashram assisted him very effectively, especially in type-writing manuscript, copying manuscript, etc., of Sri Gurudev. Apart from editing and compiling such massive works like *Sadhana*, Swami Omkarananda also is known as the author of some independent productions like the Foundation of Swami Sivananda's literature, etc., during the days of his life in the Ashram, till about 1966.

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### SWAMI NITYANANDA

Swami Nityananda hails from Coorg which is now called Koduku, somewhere near Mercara (Karnataka), and he was associated with the building construction work of the Ashram almost ever since he joined Sri Gurudev. He was a very careful observer of things from the point of view of beautifying the Ashram through building construction work. He never concerned himself with anything else except bricks and mortars and supervising the construction work for many many years. He was

a very close friend of Swami Chinmayananda during the pre-Sannyasa days in the Ashram, though Swami Chinmayananda was a literary type,—journalistic and lecturing,—whereas Swami Nityananda was a very active, working type. He was a great support to Swami Dayananda in setting up the Ashram's Printing Press in September, 1951 and he was the Manager of the Press almost from its establishment. After a few years of service in the Ashram, he left and settled down in Delhi (Dakshinapuri) and started a very progressive school for the welfare of poor people of that area. He is still living there, doing wonderful work for the benefit of the poor.

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### SWAMI PURUSHOTHAM

Sri Purushotham came and joined the Ashram in the year 1947 as a mere lad of about 16 years of age, known as 'Sunder Gounder' in his family. He hailed from the village of 'Kodumudi' near Nerur (Trichy District) of Tamil Nadu, which is the sacred Samadhisthana of the renowned Avadhoot, Sadasiva Brahmendra Swamigal. Leaving home while only 15 years of age, he travelled up to Allahabad and finally arrived at the Sivanandashram, Muni-ki-Reti, in the spring of 1947. He was given the new spiritual name as 'Purushotham'.

Being strong and able bodied, he was asked to take up the personal service of Sri Gurudev and thus he became his close attendant in Gurudev's own holy Kutir by the banks of the Ganga. Purushotham soon became a really expert cook and was thus able to render invaluable service to the blessed physical vehicle of Gurudev which had to have special kind of diet due to its long-standing diabetic condition, daily strain, etc.



Purushotham was one of those who accompanied Sri Gurudev in 1950 during Gurudev's All-India Spiritual Tour. He rendered indefatigable service during this tour. In the year 1953 he did the difficult Kailash-Manasasarovar Yatra. After his return from this pilgrimage he worked as Gurudev's personal photographer for many years.

During the 1959 Sivananda Literature Festival, he was one of the main persons who rendered great service in getting up the very beautiful and artistic exhibition of Gurudev's life in enlarged photo wood-cuts.

Sri Purushotham was a silent devotee of Lord Sri Subrahmanya of Palani, South India.

On 5th January, '76 early morning, his end came, after a considerable period of indifferent health patiently undergone and a couple of months of final illness silently borne, when Purushotham was 47 years of age, of which he had lived as a resident Sadhaka and Sevak for nearly 30 years in the Sivananda Ashram.

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### SWAMI VISHNUDEVANANDA

Born on the 31st of December, 1927, he was known as Kuttan Nair. He hails from Kerala, where he had his school education. After completing school, he was engaged in teaching for sometime, after which he joined the Indian Army. While searching for a misplaced paper, he happened to lay his hand on a pamphlet entitled 'Sadhana Tattwa' by Swami Sivananda. The practical instructions in that pamphlet attracted him to Sivananda. He took leave, went to Rishikesh and had Darshan of Swamiji. Subsequently he visited the Ashram a few times and finally when he came to the Ashram in 1947 to attend the Dia-

mond Jubilee of Swami Sivananda, the Master told him, "Stay here," and he stayed. The Master initiated him into the holy order of Sannyasa, on the sacred Mahasivaratri, in February 1949, and gave him the name Swami Vishnudevananda.

When he entered the Ashram he was specially interested in the Hatha Yoga techniques, knowledge of which he brought with him even when he came from Kerala. The Master, knowing his abilities, made him the Professor of Hatha Yoga in the Forest Academy of the Ashram which was the only work he did for several years. It was during a period of absence from the Headquarters of Swami Madhavananda, the Secretary, that Sri Gurudev nominated Swami Vishnudevananda as the Secretary of the Ashram, sometime in the year 1955-56. During those very hard days when the financial strength of the Ashram was not much, Swami Vishnudevananda worked hard not merely as a managing Secretary but took immense interest in seeing to it that a temple is built in the name of Sri Gurudev, called Sri Guru Mandir. He had to struggle hard to achieve this purpose which of course he completed. In the year 1957, devotees who were attached to him due to the teaching they got through him got interested in him to such an extent that they invited him to countries outside, which invitation he accepted with the permission of Sri Gurudev and went to Malaysia, Hong Kong and Japan and from Japan he went to America fixing his permanent Centre in Montreal, in Canada. He opened other Centres in the United States and also several other Yoga Centres in Europe.

Today Swami Vishnudevananda is a very well-known name and his work is of international reputation and very few in the field of Yoga in the world would be unacquainted with the name of Swami

Vishnudevananda. He has also a Centre in India in Nayyardam near Trivandrum, South India. Swami Vishnudevananda is a very simple man, though, like a magician, he worked a miracle in the West, where tirelessly he worked to bring together many complex elements, group of devotees and participants in his work. He maintained a simplicity of his own and almost not caring for himself, only caring for the welfare of his mission and his devotees. He lives the life of a desireless, unselfish and simple man, working very hard vigorously for sometime and completely severing himself from work at other times and rushing back to the Himalayan peaks, Uttarakashi and Gangottari often times for retreat and personal prayer and meditation. He has taken several rounds of trip through the world and through India in the name of Sri Gurudev and it is a great praiseworthy quality of his that even after earning such a reputation as a Yoga Teacher throughout the world, even today he considers himself as the humble servant of the great master Swami Sivananda and never does he forget to mention the name of the Master when he speaks whether in Satsangas, retreats, seminars or conferences. He is an extremely good person, simple to the core, very hard working and immensely devoted to the name of Sri Gurudev and his Mission.

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### SWAMI CHINMAYANANDA

Known as Balakrishnan, he was born of noble parents at Ernakulam (Kerala) on the 8th of May, 1917. The rigidity of the family daily routine of worship, lasting for quite a few hours, became part and parcel of the mental and moral make-up of the young lad. And, added to this, he had the rare chance of coming under the influence

of his family-Gurus who were saintly souls. Right from young age he had the inquiring mind which critically questioned everything. He was equally brilliant in his studies and emerged out of the Lucknow University as a Master of Arts. Like many of the highly learned youths who find themselves in a dilemma as to what to do with life when they come out of the universities, Balakrishnan too was assailed by doubts with conflicting ideologies. But providence guided him properly; he studied the great works of Swami Vivekananda, Aurobindo and others, and found his way to his Master, Swami Sivananda.

Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj knew that he was an exceptionally gifted person and entrusted him with conducting a Gita Committee, as Gurudev called it, which consisted of some members,—the members being Sri Balakrishna Menon (Swami Chinmayananda), Swami Krishnananda (II), a very learned philosopher from Bihar called Sri Nanda Kishore Srivastava, etc. He used to conduct classes in the Ashram, now and then. He was ordained into Sannyasa by Sri Gurudev on 25th February, 1949 to pursue further studies of scriptures under Swami Tapovanamji Maharaj, in Uttarakashi where he stayed with the great Master studying Panchadasi and other Vedanta Texts as well as Upanishads. Having mastered these texts, Swami Chinmayananda started his own Jnana Yajna Mission and moved from corner to corner of India conducting Gita Yajna classes, Upanishad classes and discourses on the scriptures, which earned him great reputation as an extraordinary orator and a masterly exponent of India's culture, its literary heritage and scriptural lore. Swami Chinmayananda has also travelled to the West many a time. He has Centres in various places in India and also abroad. Today he is one of the



world-figures who have hoisted the flag of India's spiritual heritage not only in this country but also in the other countries of the world.

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### SWAMI SATCHIDANANDA-I

Sri Venkatachala Madi hails from Karnataka, being born on the 5th of December, 1927. He had good spiritual Samskaras from childhood. Even as a student, he started practising Sadhana which was not liked by his parents. So he left the house, wandered here and there, and arrived in Sivananda Ashram in 1948. He was initiated into the holy order of Sannyasa in 1951 and was given the monastic name of Swami Satchidananda.

Swami Satchidananda was a personal assistant of Sri Gurudev. He came as a sincere seeker of God. As a result of *Purvapunya* or the meritorious deeds of his previous lives, as it were, he was blessed with such a service which is rare to find, viz., to be always, throughout the twenty-four hours, with Sri Gurudev himself, not only serving Sri Gurudev in the light of whatever instructions came from him but even to read the mind of Sri Gurudev himself and to know beforehand what were Sri Gurudev's requirements. Indefatigably, without taking rest and feeling no exhaustion, surrendering oneself, sacrificing his personal comforts Swami Satchidananda served Sri Gurudev for years. There is almost a kind of similarity in the relationship of Swami Satchidananda to Sri Gurudev as was the relationship with Padmapada and Hastamalaka to Adi Sankaracharya who were not academic associates of the master but personally very dear and near to the great leader. He is a silent person, a non-interfering type; he minds his

business and talks to nobody. He was all-in-all in the eyes of Sri Gurudev during his life-time. Service and he became identical; he himself was service. He merged himself in the work of serving Sri Gurudev so that it was a kind of entire communion that he established in his own soul with the soul of Sri Gurudev. Such was the incomparable manner in which he served Sri Gurudev. Now, he is practically retired from every kind of work and is leading a life of personal meditation.

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### SWAMI SHUDDHANANDA

Swami Shuddhananda was an old, old devotee who was doing the work of an Archaka somewhere in a temple on the bank of Narmada in Gujarat. He hailed from Tamil Nadu. He came to the Ashram of Gurudev and was originally associated with the Ashram's temple of Lord Sri Vishwanath as an Archaka which work he performed with great devotion. Later he was made the Kothari Maharaj, care-taker of the Ashram's kitchen. Very hard days they were indeed to manage the kitchen when funds were not readily available in those formation days of the Ashram. The meticulous way in which he managed the Annakshetra together with the daily worship in Sri Vishwanath Mandir, which also he did simultaneously, for a continuous period of 14 years is something worth recording in the history of The Divine Life Society, though his name was not known to many people because he was not concerned with public life. He was a Sadhaka by himself. It was he who actually gave an impetus to the worship aspect of the temple, with special devotion and attention, a least known Swami but deserving of most concentrated attention for the service of Sri

Gurudev. He silently passed away in the Ashram after so many years of service to Lord Vishwanath, on the 18th of June 1972, on which day also he did the daily morning worship in the temple.

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### SWAMI SATYANANDA

Swami Satyananda was a teen ager, a little boy, when he came to the Ashram, but very active and proficient in Hatha Yoga right from the beginning. Many were the departments of the Ashram in which he rendered service, particularly during the later days in the Hindi department of the Ashram. He edited the Hindi journal and wrote articles and was proficient even in composing poems in Hindi and Sanskrit language; very active and tireless in his service. One of the great contributions of his, which is to be remembered for all times, is the hard work that he did in bringing about a translation and commentary in the English language of the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* by Sri Gurudev. He was actively connected with this work and, but for his struggle day and night in seeing to it that the manuscript was made ready, the book would not have actually come out. He was solely responsible, one may say, for the coming out of this book—the commentary on the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* of Sri Gurudev. Later on, he left the Ashram on an inner feeling of establishing himself separately in a secluded place and he found himself somehow landed in Bihar, a place called Monghyr, where devotees somehow recognised some value and worth and intrinsic merit in him, collaborated with him and the result was a very magnificent well-planned Institution of Yoga teaching, which became the venue for imparting instructions not only to hundreds of seekers in

India, but also countless seekers came from the West, many of whom took Sannyasa, under Swami Satyananda. He did such active and intensive work in the field of Yoga that his name is known in many places even in the West as a very competent and effective teacher of Yoga and the way of spiritual life. Now he is retired and has handed over the active work of his Ashram to an assistant of his.

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### SWAMI NIRMALANANDA

Born in Virudhunagar in Tamil Nadu in a merchant's family, on 8th March, 1916, he was named as Mariappa by his parents. He had such a natural love and attraction towards Sadhus and Sannyasins, whom he served with great devotion even from early boyhood, that he was familiarly called by everyone as 'Swamiyar'. He used to attend the activities of the Branch of the Divine Life Society at Virudhunagar and thus he came under the influence of the teachings of Swami Sivananda.

In 1949, he accompanied Swami Advaiyananda, a disciple of Swami Sivananda, on a pilgrimage to North India. While at Rishikesh, they had Darshan of Swami Sivananda, to whom Swami Advaiyananda introduced Sri Mariappa as a sincere and active worker devoted to Sadhus. At once Sri Gurudev told Mariappa, "Be with me; I want selfless workers like you; I will give you Sannyasa." And Mariappa stayed! Swami Sivananda gave him Sannyasa on the holy Mahasivaratri in 1950 and he became Swami Nirmalananda. Since then he has rendered active and untiring service in various departments of the Ashram,—Annakshetra, Hospital, Publication League, etc., in recognition of which Sri Gurudev awarded him the title of 'Viswa Seva-Duran-



dhara Karma Yogi' on 8th September, 1955. During these years of his stay in the Ashram, he has travelled widely throughout India, rendering his services in the different spiritual Institutions during their special functions, for which purpose he used to be invited by them. Now, he is more or less retired from all duties in the Ashram, though he continues to offer his services whenever occasions demand.

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## SWAMI SATCHIDANANDA-II

Ramaswamy, as he was named by his parents, was born on the 22nd December, 1914, as the second son of a very devout couple Sri Kalyanasundaram and Smt. Velammai, at Chettipalayam, Tamilnadu. After pursuing a highly successful business career, he gave up worldly life on the death of his wife. He visited many sacred places of pilgrimage, stayed in Ashrams with holy saints like Sadhu Swamigal, Sri Aurobindo, Swami Chidbhananda and Sri Ramana Maharshi, and finally arrived at Rishikesh in 1949 and met Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj upon which he felt he has reached his final destination and his Guru. He was initiated into the holy order of Sannyasa by Swami Sivananda giving him the monastic name of Swami Satchidananda, on the 10th of July, 1949. In February, 1951, Sri Gurudev asked him to undertake an All-India Tour, during which he gave lectures, taught Yoga Asanas and organised Branches of the Divine Life Society.

Knowing his ability in the work of management and also proficiency especially in Hatha Yoga, Swami Satchidananda was asked by Sri Gurudev to go to Ceylon, now known as Sri Lanka, to build up a centre of the Divine Life Society, in response to an ardent request by a lady called Swamy

Satchidananda Mata. She was a very devoted lady and considered Gurudev as God himself. But she had not the ability to maintain the Centre being a lady herself and not very much acquainted with the knowledge of the Sastras, much less of Yoga. So Swami Satchidananda's going there was a God-sent, and he actually fulfilled this pious wish of Sri Gurudev. Having seen that the Centres in Sri Lanka are raised to the status expected by Sri Gurudev, he moved further to the West until he established himself in the United States of America where he has his Yoga capital in Buckingham, Virginia.

This Swami has also veritably worked a miracle in the West, and in one of the movies that he has produced he has portrayed the difficulties which he had to face in doing any good at all to people there as also the achievements which were to his credit by the grace of Sri Gurudev; because materialism, atheism and total non-acquaintance with the higher values of life etc., etc., were some of the negative sides which he had to face in Western youth especially, all which he handled very dexterously with his calm, quiet and poised nature, speaking slowly, powerfully, cogently and touchingly whatever be the disciples, students and enquirers that came to him for guidance. Today he has a vast Ashram with a land extended to some hundreds of acres where he has recently built a temple of all faiths, called the LOTUS (Light of Truth Universal Shrine), which is the work of several years of many people's cooperation and thinking under his guidance. The construction of this was completed recently and inauguration of it was done in July 1986 in a most grand manner attended by many dignitaries both in the West as well as in the East. Swami Satchidananda is also a staunch devotee of Sri Gurudev

though he stands by himself, on his own legs, in reputation as well as material security. He is one of the stalwarts who succeeded to the point of perfection in carrying the message of Sri Gurudev, in the West.

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### SWAMI CHAITANYANANDA

Swami Chaitanyananda hails from Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh. He came to the Ashram in the late forties, in the service of Sri Gurudev. Swami Sivananda initiated him into Sannyasa in 1951 and he became the first in-charge of the correspondence section which assumed a position of a full-fledged department since the return of Sri Gurudev after the All-India tour in November, 1950 because of the stir the tour had created and the consequent bulk of correspondence that the daily mail brought. He did this service for many years, until he left for Uttarakashi in 1958, for seclusion and Sadhana. At Uttarakashi he stays in the small Sivananda Ashram, built by the Headquarters at Rishikesh, and conducts classes in Vedantic Texts for the benefit of Sadhakas.

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### SWAMI RAGUNATHANANDA

Sri G. Vishwanathan hailed from Tamil Nadu. He was born in 1924. While he was serving as an Assistant in the Postal Department at Nagpur, he had the chance of serving Swami Chidananda, when the latter was sent by Sri Gurudev to Nagpur in December, 1947 for medical treatment under Dr. B.A. Vaidya, a reputed physician. The holy presence of Swami Chidananda inspired young Vishwanathan and in a year or so after this, he made up his mind to

join the Ashram and became a permanent resident.

During his stay in the Ashram as a Brahmachari, Vishwanathan endeared himself to all the members in the Ashram at the Headquarters with his voluntary and even unsolicited selfless Seva in many a capacity, especially as a kind of public relations man, a "*liaison officer*" as it were, between the Ashram's Management and the public outside, including several Government departments with which the Ashram had frequently some work or the other. Considering his honesty, sincerity and good-will in the cause of unselfish Seva to the public, Sri Gurudev initiated him into the holy Order of Sannyasa, a few years afterwards, with the monastic name of Swami Raghunathananda. Previous to this he was given the novitiate name of Raghuvir Chaitanya. After he took Sannyasa, Swami Raghunathananda worked for some years as a Secretary in the Ashram's Management, as a nominee appointed by Sri Gurudev himself. In this period as Secretary, he proved himself an able assistant to the General Secretary, and an efficient medium of contact between the Society and the public outside in its relations to the Ashram's humanitarian service.

Though he was a chronic diabetic patient, he continued his services to the Ashram till his last days. After being bed-ridden for a short period, he passed away peacefully on the 28th of August, 1984.

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### SWAMI MADHAVANANDA

Born on the 15th of December 1917, and known as Karunanidhi, he hails from Andhra Pradesh. As he lived in both the outskirts of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, he is very conversant with the at-



mosphere of both the States and knows Telugu and Kannada languages.

When Karunanidhi arrived at the Ashram, he found that revered Sri Gurudev was away upon his "All-India Spiritual Awakening Tour". He was cordially received by Swami Krishnananda who was the in-charge of the Ashram during the absence of Gurudev and all the other office-bearers. He awaited Gurudev's return and met him for the first time on 8th November, 1950. It would appear that right at this first brief meeting and talk Gurudev immediately recognised his potentialities. Very surprisingly and to the wonder of many people, Sri Gurudev at once gave him the work of the Cashier of the Ashram. Those were very hard days as the funds were almost nil, and it was not easy for anyone to perform the duties of the Cashier. Karunanidhi as a Cashier, prior to his being ordained a Sannyasin, spent very difficult times of course with shop-keepers who were creditors of the Ashram. But with his calm, quiet and reticent nature he managed his little function of the Cashier those days very well. Recognising his spiritual worth, Sri Gurudev gave him Sannyasa within months of his arrival, i.e., on Mahasivaratri, the 6th of March, 1951 and named him Swami Madhavananda. After two or three years of his service as a Cashier, he was appointed by Gurudev by nomination as a Secretary, which, of course, increased the weight of the work he had to perform. This position of responsibility he ungrudgingly accepted and immediately commenced this performance spread over a wide area of the different departments of the Institution. Not only this; together with the responsibilities as Secretary, he took upon himself, of his own accord, the additional burden of supervising the construction works of the Ashram, sheerly with the in-

tention of seeing that there is no wastage of any kind and the building works are efficiently carried on in the interest of public good. Those were days when the Ashram was inordinately hard-pressed with inadequacy of financial resources and the work of the Secretary was indeed not a happy job. It was something which would wear out anyone and fatigue even a strong personality. The Swami indeed worked very hard and steered the course of The Divine Life Society's functions at the Headquarters during those difficult days when the income side of the Institution was hardly worth mentioning. There were many occasions when it looked that it was difficult for the Ashram to make both ends meet and one could not predict the fate of the Ashram the next day. Such was the nature of the problem created by the financial stress. Swami Madhavananda did indeed bear the brunt of the pains that an Executive of the Institution would have to undergo under such circumstances. The entire saga of the history of the Ashram at its Headquarters during those years would speak eloquently of the sacrifice which the Swami personally did, as the times required, without rest and without even adequate sleep.

The several years of such strenuous work naturally told upon his system, particularly the condition of his heart, which called for special attention by way of medical treatment. All this did not deter the Swami from continuing his *Seva* to the Institution, and it, indeed, did not cease at any time.

At the same time, he is a very religious type of person, meticulously following a daily routine of prayer and worship for several hours. He is a reserved type of person who minds his own business, as one may say, not interfering and unconcerned

with anything in the world, except whatever work is entrusted to him, and always confined to his own Kutir of prayer and worship.

Swami Madhavananda was elected as the Treasurer of the Divine Life Society in August 1963, soon after the Mahasamadhi of the Master. And in due recognition of his glorious services, he was elected as the Vice-President of the Divine Life Society, in the year 1975, which position he continues to hold till this day. This was really as it ought to have been, considering not only his elderly personality but also the intense sincerity with which he has always been identifying himself with the Ashram's spiritual ideals, the amiableness of his nature and the goodness of his heart, to mention only a few of the exemplary characters which are embodied in his person.

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#### SWAMI CHANDRASEKHARANANDA

Born in 1917 in an aristocrat family, Swami Chandrasekharananda happened to attend the Satsanga of Swami Sivananda during the latter's All-India tour in 1950 at Ahmedabad, and in the same year he joined the Ashram and dedicated himself to the service of Swami Sivananda. Educated and experienced, noble and dignified, soft and sweet, he was an ideal Sadhaka and Sevaka at once. He served in the Sivananda Publication League and the Accounts section of the Ashram for several years. On the holy occasion of Guru Purnima in the year 1953 (26th of July 1953) he was initiated into the order of Sannyasa by Sri Gurudev.

He is silent and withdrawn by nature, but dynamic and ever-ready to be of service to anyone who approaches him. Thus people used to come to him for advice in their

spiritual practices, family problems, legal matters, and what not. He would give them a patient hearing and advice them appropriately which gave them immense benefit and solace. A Swamy of great principles and austerity, he would never ask or accept anything from anyone, but does his services ungrudgingly, thus setting an example to others. He has been the Editor of the Ashram's Hindi Monthly journal 'Yoga-Vedanta' since 1962, and now he is more or less confined to his room, due to his health, yet continuing his services as in-charge of the Hindi Department of the Ashram.

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#### SWAMI TURIYANANDA

Sri K.S. Venkataramani hailed from Tamil Nadu. He came to the Ashram sometime in 1950. He was a type of versatile person, very proficient in Astrology in addition to a very good knowledge of Sanskrit language. Soon after he came to the Ashram he was ordained into the Sannyasa order, on the sacred occasion of Mahasivaratri, the 23rd of February, 1952, and given the monastic name Swami Turiyananda. Since then, he took up the work of conducting classes on Vedanta in the Ashram which occupation of his led him to concentrate more and more on the literary side. And indeed he produced a masterly exposition on the *Panchadasi* of Swami Vidyaranya as well as a very good translation of the *Vasudeva Mananam*. He was also the Editor of the journal 'Health and Long Life' for some years. He has composed quite a few Sanskrit verses and odes on Sri Gurudev. After living in the Ashram in this way for sometime and rendering service to Sri Gurudev in his literary capacity mostly, he left for Kashmir and then retired into solitude for the future period



of his life. Evidently God has taken him into his fold, inasmuch as no news has been received afterwards regarding his whereabouts.

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### SWAMI SHANMUGANANDA

Sri Venkataraman was born on the 9th of October, 1926 in the Dist. of Tanjore in Tamil Nadu, in an orthodox Brahmin family. He imbibed from his parents devotion and adherence to daily religious routines, which made him God-loving and simple. He had High School education but set up an electrical shop, though an unusual profession for his community. But that is how God works, because that gave him an opportunity to have casual Darshan of Sri Gurudev, though by sheer chance, when he got a professional order to fix up the amplifying system at the Dharmapura Adhinam where Sri Gurudev paid a visit during his All-India tour in October 1950. Even this chance Darshan of Swami Sivananda worked a miracle in the young lad. He started losing interest in his business and began to ponder over the purpose of working hard for a mere livelihood. Quickly he decided, left his business and home town without anyone's knowledge, came straight to Sivananda Ashram, Rishikesh, and met Dr. K. C. Roy who too left his practice after meeting Sri Gurudev at Chidambaram during the All-India tour and dedicated his services to the Ashram's Hospital. Dr. Roy, thinking that he had come on pilgrimage, took him to Sri Gurudev for Darshan and introduced him as an honest and devoted person, having an electrical business. At once Swami Sivananda told Venkataraman, "Stay here and serve the Ashram." Venkataraman's joy knew no bounds, to the astonishment of Dr. Roy. He stayed and

is still staying, since 21st February, 1951. Soon after that electricity was brought to the Ashram by Swami Dayananda's superhuman efforts and Venkataraman it is who did all the electrical wiring and fitting work for the entire Ashram, with whom Sri Gurudev was highly pleased. He was ordained as a Sannyasin in the year 1957. He has rendered very valuable service in the Guest and electrical departments, and is now looking after the construction of buildings of the Ashram for nearly two decades.

Though he is a follower of Advaita Vedanta, he firmly believes in the efficacy of ritualistic form of worship and devotes long hours in such worship of Lord Skanda or Shanmukha, of whom he is a very staunch devotee. He is thorough in ritualistic worship and is fully conversant with the Mantras and rituals. He is equally a scholar in Tamil literature, particularly of Lord Murugan or Shanmukha.

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### SWAMI SADANANDA (MANDIR)

Sri Siva Narayan hails from a small village called Parai, near Palghat (Kerala). He was born on the 28th of July 1911 and he studied up to the Intermediate at the Palghat Government Victoria College, Palghat. He joined the army as Havildar clerk and after nine years of service he was repatriated in 1947. He happened to come to Rishikesh in 1951 and meet Swami Sivananda who asked him to stay in the Ashram and do service, which he obeyed. With his experience in the Army, he was very efficient and useful in attending to the bulk of correspondence of various departments, initially of the Ayurvedic Pharmacy and later on of the Lord Sri Vishwanath Mandir and Samadhi Mandir. He was initiated into the holy order of Sannyasa on 4th of

March, 1962, the sacred Mahasivaratri. He is also proficient in ritualistic worship, which he used to conduct at the temples of the Ashram. In 1980, he retired from active participation in the Ashram's work and since then devotes his time in Sadhana.

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### **SRI VEERARAGHAVULU**

Born in Cheerala village (Guntur Dist.), Andhra Pradesh, Sri Veeraraghavulu came to the Ashram of Sri Gurudev when he was very young, around 20 years of age, in the month of December, 1951. Most unassuming Sadhaka of the Ashram and shy in nature, his devotion to Sri Gurudev expressed in the form of consistent service in the binding section of the Ashram's Printing Press from 1952 till this day is something enviable and worth recording. Because of his silent and non-interfering nature, in the truest sense of the terms, he is not likely to be known even to many of the residents of the Ashram, much less to the visitors. Guru-Seva and Sadhana, that is Veeraraghavulu, we may say; a Sadhaka who never asks for anything, never speaks a word and is ever happy under all circumstances. Simple to the core and dedicated in body, mind and soul to the Mission of the Master, he shines as a rare Sadhaka in the history of the Divine Life Society.

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### **SWAMI PARIPOORNANANDA**

Born on the 5th of November, 1910, at Varagoor (Tanjore Dist, Tamil Nadu), he was named as Sri T. Srinivasan by his parents. Hailing from an orthodox Brahmin family, he was brought up in a religious atmosphere of Puja, study, etc., which provided the needed circumstances for the flow-

ering of the good deeds of past births. He was intelligent and became a graduate in Commerce. When he was working as an Accountant in the New Great Insurance Co., Calcutta, he came on a pilgrimage to Rishikesh and had Darshan of Swami Sivananda, whose books he had read earlier. The Master asked him to serve his Ashram, and so he resigned his job when he returned to Calcutta and joined the Ashram in May 1952. Seeing him quite evolved, Swami Sivananda gave him Sannyasa immediately, on the holy occasion of Guru Purnima, on the 7th of July, 1952, and he was known as Swami Paripoornananda.

Swami Paripoornananda is a sincere seeker and a devotee of a rare type. Singing or chanting or even hearing the Name of God would transport him to a blissful state, and he would sit immersed in that state for hours, oblivious of anything, unmoved like a statue. He worked in various departments of the Ashram,—as Manager of the Sivananda Publication League, looking after Sri Gurudev's correspondence, Accounts Section, etc. He is a medical-miracle, whose one lung only functions, with which he is more active at 77 years than ever before.

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### **SRI NARASIMHULU**

Sri Narasimhulu was born on the 15th of August, 1932 in a small village in Andhra Pradesh. Even from childhood he evinced interest in matters religious and spiritual,—he used to read lives of saints and the Bhagavad Gita, which was the treasure of the family. He had an inner, unknown attraction for the holy Ganga and the Himalayas. It was so irresistible that no sooner did he complete his matriculation examination; than he took the earliest opportunity to es-



cape from the house unnoticed and empty-handed, depending wholly on the mercy of God. By train he was proceeding towards Delhi, but without money and without a ticket, on account of which he had to face much hardship and had to spend a month in a reformatory for travelling without ticket. He finally arrived at Rishikesh in July 1952 and proceeded to Lakshman Jhula where he tried to live in a cave for a couple of days. Finding it uncogenial, he came down and landed himself in Sivananda Ashram. The embodiment of love and compassion, Swami Sivananda, asked him to serve in the Ashram's Printing Press, where he is serving till this day.

Very silent and pleasing in his behaviour, Narasimhulu's dedication to the cause of Sri Gurudev's Mission is something unique. He would readily and willingly help anyone needing his services, particularly in the field of writing articles and compiling books, which work was very dear to the heart of Sri Gurudev, who used to say, 'No bricks, but books', meaning thereby his great interest in printing and distributing books free than to build rooms and buildings. Sri Narasimhulu was a great source of help to everyone who was associated with the Printing Press, particularly to Swami Omkarananda, Swami Shivapremananda and Swami Venkatesananda, who all used to work like devils, day and night, in preparing manuscripts and printing of books of Sri Gurudev. Though many were the Managers of the Ashram's Printing Press, virtually Sri Narasimhulu is the one who really manages the Press. His knowledge of the entire process of printing is so complete that every Manager has to take his assistance, which he renders with great joy and humility. He is a living example of Sri Gurudev's teaching 'Adapt, Adjust, Ac-

commodate' together with 'Be Good, Do Good'.

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### SWAMI JYOTIRMAYANANDA

Swami Jyotirmayananda was born on the 3rd of February, 1931 in a pious family in the state of Bihar. From his very childhood days he showed signs of his future greatness. He was calm and reflective, brilliant in his studies, as also loved by his friends and relatives.

While he was studying in the Science College of Patna, when he was 18 years of age, he had read Swami Sivananda's book "Mind, Its Mysteries and Control." This had captured him and when Swami Sivananda visited Patna during his All-India tour in September, 1950, he had Swamiji's first Darshan at Patna. Then on his mind was drawn towards his Master more and more. Finally in 1952 he came to Rishikesh on a short visit, but stayed on permanently.

Gurudev found that he is a good speaker and entrusted him with the work of conducting classes. He also held regular discourses, very frequently, during the evening Satsangas in the Ashram in the very presence of Sri Gurudev. After being granted Sannyasa by Sri Gurudev on the 3rd of February, 1954, he took to literary side of work more intensely and became the editor of the Hindi journal of the Society known as 'Yoga-Vedanta'. This work he did exquisitely, in addition to conducting daily classes on scriptures such as the Yoga-Vasishtha in the Ashram's Bhajan Hall, which many visitors attended with great love and concentration and interest. His exemplary life, great command of spiritual knowledge, love towards all beings, and his very impressive and dynamic exposition of Yoga and Vedanta Philosophy at-

tracted enormous interest all over India, and in different countries of the world. He frequently lectured by invitation at All India Vedanta Conferences in Delhi, Amritsar, Ludhiana and other parts of India. Thus he continued the work of editing the 'Yoga-Vedanta' journal and conducting the scriptural classes until 1962, when on an invitation from a well-wisher of him he travelled to the West. Crossing Europe, he stayed for several years in Puerto Rico and in 1969 he shifted his centre to Miami in the United States where he has established a Publishing Centre and a systematically working Yoga Research Foundation, he himself being a very good writer and speaker.

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### SWAMI NADABRAHMANANDA

Sri Basavaraj Puranik was born on May 5, 1896, in Mysore State, South India. He began his formal musical training at the age of 20, and continued seventeen years of arduous discipline and austerity under three illustrious masters: Sri Sadasiva Bua of Nargund (Karnataka), Ustad Alladia Khan of Kolhapur, and Tata Bua of Benares. He became professor of music at Benares Hindu University, and was appointed court musician for the Maharaja of Mysore. His fame spread throughout India and he received numerous commercial offers, but in accordance with a vow made to his Guru, he steadfastly refused to compromise the spiritual purity of his music.

Sri Puranik came and joined the Ashram on the 13th of December, 1952 and he was initiated into the order of Sannyasa by Sri Gurudev in 1953, with the monastic name of Swami Nadabrahmananda. He was the principal of the Music Centre in our Ashram which virtually was raised to

the status of a Music College under the patronage of Sri Gurudev and Nadabrahmananda. A beautiful singer, a master of the art of Music due to which proficiency of his people used to call him modern 'Tansen'. Such was his confident touch in the Ragas of Music as well as handling of Tabala! His expertness in the various technicalities of musical performance earned him great name in different parts of the country and from many devotees who came to the Ashram, hundreds and thousands in number. He lived for sometime in Dehradun among the devotees of the Society and became responsible for starting a little Branch of the Divine Life Society at that time in Krishnanagar (Dehradun), after which again he came back to the Ashram and settled down. He lived in this Ashram for years and years like this, teaching Music and conducting Music Concerts under the auspices of Sri Gurudev.

Years after the passing of the great Master, he went to the West, firstly to the United States and then to several other states and Europe also. His ability to present himself as a master musician was really superb and people got thrilled, and thousands of devotees and eager students especially in the United States of America were trained by him, who all remember him with great reverence and devotion, love and affection even today. His departure from the United States due to age and fatigue and his coming back to the Ashram on that account brought a sense of bereavement, as it were, among the students in America who considered him as a father, a Guru and almost a God-man in the field of Music. He is now in the Headquarters Ashram living alone to himself and confining himself to his own Kutir.

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### SWAMI VIMALANANDA

Sri Nagaraj was born in 1932 in Chamarajanagar (near Mysore), Karnataka, and was a great patriot, having taken part in the Quit India Movement in his early student life. He was at the same time a great admirer of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Swami Vivekananda, whose teachings had a profound influence on his life. He used to regularly attend the Ramakrishna Mission Satsanga. Finally his love for seclusion on the banks of the Ganga for doing intense Sadhana brought him to Sivananda Ashram in 1953.

Sri Nagaraj is an exemplary Nishkama Karma Yogi, and Swami Sivananda at once recognised this spirit in him. Because of his sincerity and trustworthy nature, he was entrusted with the job of receiving Sri Gurudev's mail and attending to his correspondence which he did to the great satisfaction of Sri Gurudev. He was at the same time doing personal service to Swami Chidananda, towards whom he slowly developed an exceptional type of devotion and implicit obedience, so much so that his words were gospel to Sri Nagaraj. It is indeed rare to see such type of devotion and obedience these days. Even so his love for Sri Gurudev, the Ganga and the Himalayas is something unique. Often he would go into the Himalayan jungles for solitude and seclusion, for hours together.

Since Sri Gurudev's Mahasamadhi in 1963, Sri Nagaraj is serving Swami Chidananda as his personal Secretary. On 26th of July, 1972, the sacred Guru Purnima, he embraced the Order of Sannyasa and got the monastic name Swami Vimalananda. Being Secretary to Swami Chidananda, he has travelled widely, both in India and abroad. He is an embodiment of patience and self-sacrifice.

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### SRI RANGANATHAN

Born in Dharapuram (Coimbatore Dist.), Tamil Nadu, in the year 1931, Sri Ranganathan belonged to the business-community. Not caring for much education, he joined the family business in his teens. Perhaps, that was the Lord's way! In the waste-paper used for wrapping things in the shop, he found an old Issue of 'The Divine Life' journal; the picture of Sri Gurudev and his inspiring instructions in simple language caught fire in the young lad. He quietly slipped away from his house, took the train, reached Rishikesh and dedicated himself to Swami Sivananda in March, 1953. The Ashram's Printing Press was in its infancy then and Ranganathan became a Tamil-compositor in the Press. He worked in the Press for about five years, when the Tamil-composing was discontinued. Since then he has been doing the most unpleasant and laborious job of daily marketing, to buy all the needs of the Ashram's kitchen, the Temples and other departments, because of which he is familiarly known as the BAZAR MASTER. The consistency with which he has been and is doing the job all the seven days of the week for more than two decades bespeak his conviction that Guru-Seva itself is Sadhana, though he is very regular in his personal Sadhana as well.

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### SWAMI JNANANANDA

Swami Jnanananda hails from Kerala. He is a Mahopadhyaya in Sanskrit. Being well-versed in Sanskrit, he was a Sanskrit teacher for some years, after which he joined the Army service. He joined the Ashram of Sri Gurudev in 1953 and Swami Sivananda at once recognised his worth and learning, and encouraged him to compose poems in Sanskrit. Swami Jnanananda has composed

many Odes on Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj as also a number of poems on various occasions in glorification of the Master. His great contribution is the "Sivananda Suprabhatam" which is very famous and is played and recited in the Ashram as well as by devotees, since the same has been made available on gramophone records. Essentially, he was the chief proof-reader, both English and Sanskrit, of the Ashram's Printing Press from the time of his arrival, till the late seventies. However, health has now prevented him from continuing the seva as he is confined to his bed, due to old age.

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### SWAMI VIDYANANDA

Born in a pious and religious family in Kerala in the year 1914, he was known as Ramanathan, the second son of a big family consisting of 2 sons and five daughters. The influence of the mother over the boy was very profound in creating spiritual Sam-skaras in him. At the age of eight, his mother took both her sons on a long pilgrimage for three years, all over India, during which period the young boy had the opportunity of receiving the blessings of many Siddha-purushas and holy saints. After an unsuccessful business-career, he went to Chidambaram, in Tamilnadu, where he came in contact with his music Guru, Sri P. Srinivasa Iyer, who was himself a Naishthika Brahmachari and a saintly soul. He taught him Veena for 12 days after which he asked him to practise on his own, but the Guru's power and grace was such that he soon not only mastered the subtle art but also could connect music with Vedantic thoughts. In order to help his student support his large family, Sri Srinivasa Iyer put him in the Cinema field, in which Sri Ramanathan worked for nearly 25 years, in Bombay and Ma-

dras. This was more a period of Sadhana for him than earning money. In 1950, he became a member of the Divine Life Society and in 1954, he came to Rishikesh along with his music Guru for Swami Sivanandaji's Darshan. Sivananda asked him to stay here permanently and said that he had been praying to Goddess Saraswati to send a person who could play on the Veena. However, he had to go back to Madras to complete his contracts and other pending works, and joined the Sivananda Ashram in 1956. On the holy Guru Purnima of the same year, Sivananda gave him Sannyasa and named him Swami Vidyananda.

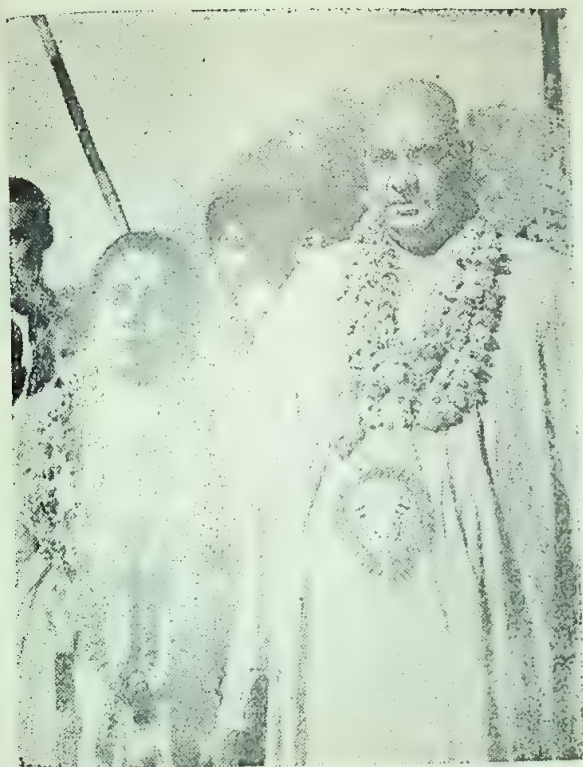
Since then Swami Vidyananda has been teaching music, Bhajans and Kirtans on the Veena to many students, as an integral part of his Sadhana. He holds an early morning Bhajan class and afternoon study-class in his own room, every day, in which interested Ashramites and visitors join with great enthusiasm and derive the much needed peace and solace. His feelingful Bhajans and mastery in Veena have endeared him to countless visitors, who make an annual visit to the Ashram, primarily to recharge themselves with the divine vibrations in his Bhajan-class. His Bhajans are a treat to the souls and many are the foreign students who were enchanted by his soulful songs that wished to take him to their countries. But the Swami is happy and contented with his simple life of Bhajan, Kirtan and study in his tiny room, on the banks of the Ganga, in the holy Ashram of Sri Gurudev, keeping himself in continuous remembrance of the Lord. It is not unusual to see him go into a trance while singing Bhajans and Kirtans.

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### SWAMI SEVAKANANDA

Sri Devidas Seth of Amritsar, a great well-wisher and devotee, had been an exam-

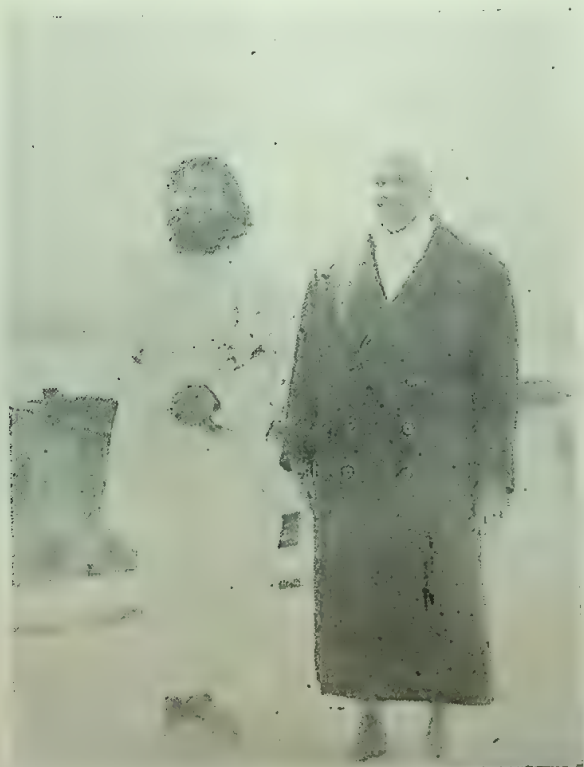




Swami Hridayananda Mataji, Eye-Surgeon  
and personal physician to Sri Gurudev



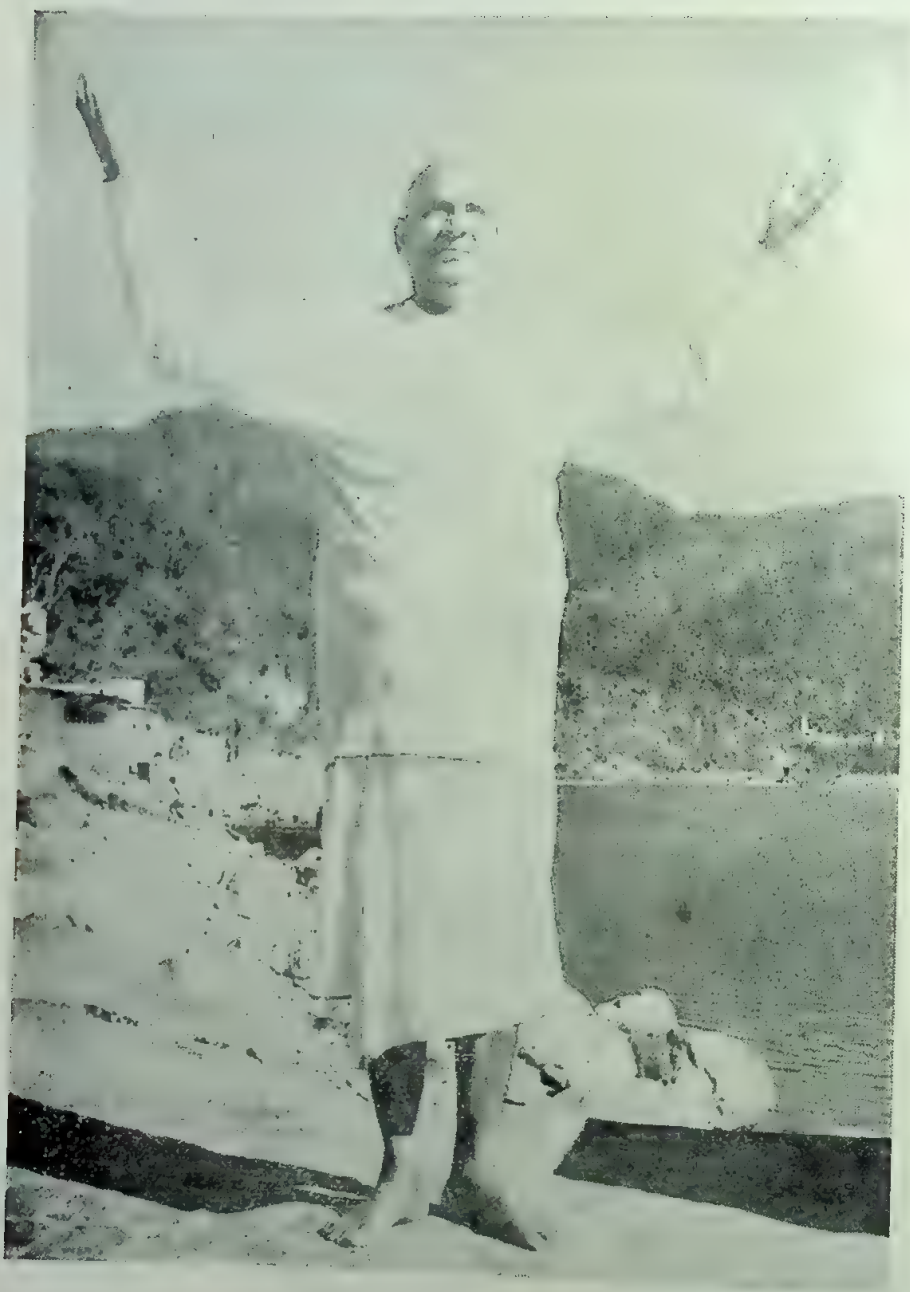
Swami Devananda, the Chinna Swami



Yogiraj Swami Satchidananda



(From left): Sri Veeraraghavulu, Sri Gurudev,  
Sri Narasimhulu and Swami Jnanananda



O man! Become fearless. Rise up. Be strong. Be bold.  
It is another happy new day. Act. Act bravely, virtu-  
ously. Behold the Self. Realise the Atman. Be blissful.

—SWAMI SIVANANDA



ple of total self-surrender to Master. Sri Devidas Seth and his three stalwart sons—Sri Pannalal Seth, Sri Chamanlal Seth and Sri Tilakraj Seth—formed, since the early years of the Mission of Sri Gurudev, a standing monument of Guru-Bhakti, of devout surrender of self, possession and all, to the Guru. The hallowed name of Sivananda was to them the unfailing panacea for all ailments and tribulations. This great tradition of utter self-surrender and devotion to Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj is even now continuing in the ideal lives of the families of Sri Pannalal, Sri Chamanlal and Sri Tilakraj,—whose families consist of Bhaktas, whether child or adult, male or female. Sri Devidas later on settled in the Ashram and was initiated into the sacred order of Sannyasa by Sri Gurudev, and he was known as Swami Sevakananda, a befitting name. This glorious disciple had only two ideals before him: *Ganga* and *Guru*. He saw God in these two manifestations, and had no value for anything else in the world. A devotee of the Lord, a true disciple of the Guru, a generous and magnanimous heart towards the Divine Life Society, Swami Sevakananda should be an exemplar to others in the implicit dedication of oneself to one's chosen spiritual ideal. This great soul passed away on the 21st of November 1965.

In keeping up with the family tradition, Sri Pannalal Seth also settled down in the Ashram after retirement and took Sannyasa in 1980 (Swami Prashantananda) and attained Mahasamadhi on the *14th of July*, 1981,—the exact *date* on which Sri Gurudev attained Mahasamadhi in 1963; such was his utter Guru-Bhakti.

Sri Chamanlal Seth's and Sri Tilakraj Seth's devotion to Sri Gurudev and his Mission continue to this date, with ever-increasing dedication and good-will.

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### SWAMI KRISHNA (KUTIA)

Born in Mathur Village (Dist:Palghat) in 1924, he was named Sekharan by his parents. He joined the Ashram of Swami Sivananda on the 27th of November, 1954 and was ordained as a Brahmachari in the next year itself. On the sacred day of Mahasivaratri in 1958, he took Sannyasa and was given the name of Swami Krishnananda. He had a natural inclination towards Hatha Yoga which he learned with great zeal and soon became an adept in that, and he became the Hatha Yoga teacher of the Ashram when Swami Vishnudevananda went to the West deputed by Sri Gurudev. In addition, he has a special gift in cooking, due to which Sri Gurudev engaged him in his service after the retirement of Swami Govindananda due to old age, in 1959. He served Sri Gurudev heart and soul, and he was so trustworthy that the Master took him in his personal service during his last days. Because of his services to Sri Gurudev in his Kutia, he slowly began to be known as Swami Krishna (Kutia), to distinguish him from other Swamis of the same name. He continues his services in the Ashram, in the Guest-kitchen, in a spirit of Guru-Seva even to this date.

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### SWAMI HRIDAYANANDA

Born on the 18th of April, 1914, in an orthodox and pious family of Perur, in Travancore (Kerala) State, she was known as Chellamma. She passed her Senior Cambridge examination privately and then had her Inter and M.B.,B.S., combined course of 7 years at the Lady Hardinge College, Delhi. She was one of the brightest students and had won many prizes and medals.

In 1942 she was appointed as Asstt. Surgeon in the Govt. Ophthalmic Hospital,

Madras. Being very efficient, she got quick promotions and became the Civil Surgeon at the same hospital. In 1951 she resigned her job and took to private practice.

She happened to buy a second-hand book of Swami Sivananda at the Moore Market, Madras, and when she saw the photo of the Swami in the book, she instantaneously felt that she had known him, intimately. That book possessed her and the same evening she had a vision of Swami Sivananda in her meditation, blessing her. Since then an inner transformation was taking place in her inspite of herself.

In April 1955, she came on a short visit to Rishikesh, to have Darshan of Swami Sivananda. But Sivananda played the miracle. She asked her to do some service in the hospital and when the day of her return to Madras came she decided to stay on, forever, at Rishikesh. On the holy Guru Purnima day in 1956, she was initiated into the sacred order of Sannyasa and given the name Swami Sivananda-Hridayananda.

Swami Hridayananda being an eye specialist, Sri Gurudev asked her to start a regular Eye Hospital for the benefit of everyone, as the Sivananda Charitable Hospital that was serving the people then was not a systematic hospital. Simultaneously it so happened that one Capt. Srivatsava, who was also a great devotee of Sri Gurudev, became responsible for a substantial contribution by way of donation for the construction of an Eye Hospital, which became an added incentive to step up the work. Under the instruction of Sri Gurudev himself the work of building a regular Eye Hospital commenced and progressed by leaps and bounds. Swami Hridayananda became the Medical Officer of this service wing of the Ashram and within a few years she established such a name as an expert physician

and surgeon that the reputation of the expert handling of cases in the hospital reached the ears of the officials of the Government in the State and the Centre, who were eager to assist our hospital by grants given by the Government.

Swami Hridayananda was very personally associated with Sri Gurudev not only as a Medical Officer but as a personal assistant and personal physician. In addition to her medical career, she was also an ardent spiritual seeker who wrote articles, essays and even books on Sri Gurudev which was an expression of her aspiration and devotion to Sri Gurudev. She became very famous as a spiritual guide to many people and seekers who came to the Ashram and a very able physician and surgeon at the same time. This fame of Swami Hridayananda Mataji as a spiritual guide particularly brought her request from various parts of the country and even abroad. Invitations came from different places and one of them was from our revered Sri Swami Sahajanandaji Maharaj of Durban, South Africa, which invitation she accepted and went to South Africa. From South Africa she toured different parts of Europe and America, where she conducted extensive series of lectures and established certain centres for spiritual guidance. Finally she is now settled in Europe (France, Belgium and Holland), which is a delight and great satisfaction to seekers in those parts.

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### SWAMI NILAKANTHANANDA

Pandit Nila Kantha hails from Kashmir. Being born in an orthodox Brahmin family, he was brought up in the traditional way and educated in the higher values of life from childhood itself. A great scholar in Sanskrit and well-versed in Hindi, he



was well acquainted with the scriptures. In order to devote his entire time and energy to the seeking of God, he remained a bachelor, utilising his time in study and Sadhana. He was fired with the spirit of detachment and adherence to duty. He served as a teacher in Govt. Middle School, Rang Teng, Nawakadal, Srinagar. Immediately after his retirement from the Education Department of the Jammu and Kashmir State Govt. in 1955, he came to Rishikesh and joined the Sivananda Ashram in the same year.

Since joining the Ashram he pursued his quest for knowledge by undertaking a profound study of the scriptures and expounding them in the Ashram's evening Satsanga and conducting regular classes for the benefit of students of Vedanta which is his forte. 'Simple living and high thinking' applies to him, in letter and in spirit. Child-like in nature, he has maintained his original aspiration and seeking spirit even to this day. He is an ideal Sannyasin, a venerable Mahatma without the least trace of attachment for anything. The simple Kutia in which he is living and his appearance give one an inkling of the Rishis of yore. It is rare to see such utter simplicity and genuineness of seeking among the Mahatmas of these days.

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### SWAMI SANTANANDA

Sri Chandrasekar, as he was known when he came to the Ashram from Swami Jnanananda Ashram, Tirukkoilur (South India), hails from Tamil Nadu. He joined the Sivananda Ashram in 1957; a young man with an exceptional gift of melodious voice. He was ordained as a Sannyasin soon after his arrival and was named as Swami Santananda. By his soulful sweet

Kirtans he used to commence the daily Satsangas in the Ashram, which would transport him and the audience to the realm of ecstasy. Devotees used to forget themselves in bliss. This young and enthusiastic Swami was also a personal Secretary to Sri Gurudev, especially during the last few years of the Master when his physical frame needed great care and service due to age and ailments, which he did with all love and dedication. After an year of the Master's Mahasamadhi, sometime by the end of 1964, he felt an urge to live by himself and left the Ashram. His charming personality and sweet voice are irresistible and so wherever he went he attracted devotees in large numbers. Thus he soon found groups of Kirtan-lovers gathering around him in different towns of South India, as well as in Malaysia and Singapore where the Indian population is quite large. He formed what is known as "Siva Family" in different places, the most dynamic of which is in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, where the Swami has established a large spiritual and cultural Centre, which is doing social, cultural and spiritual services under his inspiration and guidance.

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### SWAMI PREMANANDA-II

Swami Premananda came subsequent to the Swami Premananda-I mentioned earlier. He was working as an officer in the revenue department of the Government, and he used to visit the Ashram. Later on he relinquished this job on a call from the spiritual ideal of life, in pursuit of which he came to the Ashram of Sri Gurudev, sometime in 1957. Sri Gurudev found him to be a very honest worker, having been already acquainted with managerial and administrative work as a revenue official. He was primarily, at the begin-

ning, entrusted with looking to the Branches of the Divine Life Society through its office at the Headquarters, which work he did to the satisfaction of Sri Gurudev. He fell ill later on. He had an acute attack of Malaria which partially rendered him deaf, by the intake of Quinine, and in that connection to take rest he went from the Ashram to some place in Rajasthan where devotees finding him a very simple and amiable person requested him to continue to stay there for a long time and start a little Centre of the Divine Life Society. This nucleus of Sri Gurudev's work in Rajasthan spread itself in different places especially in the Punjab where he became quite known to people there due to his discourses on the Ramacharita Manas of Sri Tulsidas, and spiritual messages that he gave to people together with his personal touch which began to make devotees feel that his presence has a healing touch to families and individuals who had difficulties and problems of one type or the other. For many years, Swami Premananda lived outside the Headquarters of the Ashram, carrying on this work of spreading spiritual messages, though visiting the Ashram almost annually. Once when he came to the Ashram on a visit, he was requested by Swamijis in the Ashram to settle down here and to render some service at the headquarters, which he graciously accepted and is rendering till this day.

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### SWAMI DEVANANDA

G. Sannyasi (that was the pre-Sannyasa name of Swami Devananda) was born on the 19th of June, 1937 (Eswarnama Samvatsar Jyestha Shuklapaksha Ekadasi Day), in a pious family in Andhra Pradesh. At a very young age he left home and join-

ed Sri Brahmananda Ashram in Andhra Pradesh and took Sannyasa in 1954. For sometime he was in the holy Vyasashram, Yerpedu, near Tirupati and then came to Rishikesh in 1957.

Swami Sivananda recognised the worth of this young Swami and took him for his personal service. Certainly it is the *purva-punya* (meritorious deeds of past births) of Swami Devananda that gave him this blessed and rare privilege of doing all sorts of personal service to Sri Gurudev, including menial service. This close and constant association with the sage had its unfailing effect on the young monk,—he automatically imbibed the divine virtues from Sri Gurudev, particularly the gift of 'giving'. His service to Sri Gurudev during the last days has earned him the special blessing of the Master, which has made him what he is today.

A man of self-effort and determination, coupled with devotion and application, he has made himself great in his own way. He is a master Sankirtanist, who can awaken and keep thousands spell-bound by his soulful Bhajans and Kirtans, and transport them to a different realm altogether, for which he is invited every year to Orissa and Andhra Pradesh. And recently he was the chief organisor of the group of Sannyasins and Sadhaks who went from the Ashram on an All-India tour, in 1985, propagating the teachings of Sri Gurudev, in connection with the Birth Centenary Celebrations. He has translated and got published a number of Sri Gurudev's work into the Telugu language. His dedication to Sri Gurudev and his Mission is total and undivided.

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### SWAMI ATMARAMANANDA

Sri Atmaram M. Makhijani migrated from Karachi (in Pakistan) in March 1948



due to India-Pakistan partition and was working as Personal Assistant/Private Secretary to various Ministers in different Ministries at Delhi, ending with Foreign and the Defence, in August 1958. Having been inspired by reading the bundle of books which Swami Sivananda sent to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, which happened to pass through his hands, Sri Atmaram visited the Ashram to have Swamiji's Darshan in July 1958. And, lo, the miracle took place! A week's stay at the Ashram transformed him to such an extent that he went back to Delhi, resigned his job and surrendered himself to his Guru on the 6th of September, 1958,—he who had been a faithful and zealous member of the Theosophical Society since 1925 and had purchased in 1942 about an acre of vacant plot of land at Adyar, Madras, with the intention of settling there after retirement.

Sri Atmaram M. Makhijani had a child's simplicity and plainness in his demeanour, together with an unquenchable thirst to see that the name of Sri Gurudev and of the Ashram was glorified and carried aloft everywhere, for which he worked hard in his own way, in an unostensible manner, by inspiring people who visited him or whom he knew in some way or the other. The good that he has done to the Ashram in this unique way is something which is known only to those who knew him personally and in close relation. His devotion to Sri Gurudev was something of the type which we hear of as having been characteristic of the epic figure, Ekalavya. Swami Sivananda initiated him into the holy Order of Sannyasa on the sacred day of Maha-Sivaratri, the 4th of March, 1962, and gave him the monastic name Swami Atmaramananda. After years of this kind of unique service to Sri Guru-

dev's Mission, he left this world on 13th December 1980.

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### SRI ANANTHANARAYANAN

Born at Kodaikanal in 1927, Ananthanarayanan grew up as an idealistic youth with a sensitive disposition appreciative of higher values in life. It was natural, therefore, that he found scant satisfaction in his secular college education even when he secured a triple First-class in the B.Sc. examination in 1946 at the young age of 19. Going on to pass a higher degree examination, he took a Master of Arts degree in Economics, but felt that the entire period of his education was "wasted" since he saw no substantial benefit therefrom in the shape of inner spiritual evolution or upliftment of his higher being.

This discontent made him turn to spiritual literature and he avidly absorbed the wise and lofty teachings of Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi, Swami Ram Tirtha and other luminaries of recent times. Inevitably he soon came into contact with Swami Sivananda's spiritual teachings which were at that time flooding this land like the very waters of Life to the seeking souls everywhere. This drew him to Swamiji when he got appointed at Delhi and thus came near to Rishikesh. Gurudev showered gifts of books upon Ananthanarayanan and won his heart for His divine mission of Dissemination of Spiritual Knowledge.

Back at Delhi, he set to work and brought out a beautiful little collection of Gurudev's teachings under the caption "Pearls on the Shore of Wisdom". Perhaps this first booklet actually anticipated and proved a precursor to many further works, outstanding among which is *Bliss Divine*.

Eminently qualified for this work more than anyone else, due to his high academic attainment, Ananthanarayanan has been happily endowed by providence with keen intelligence and literary ability.

He finally resolved his step and unhesitatingly threw to the winds all prospects of worldly prosperity and advancement, and renouncing his covetable post in the Central Government, turned his back to secular life and joined Swami Sivananda in 1959. Since that day he has done and is still doing yeoman service to the great Guru's holy Mission with deep sincerity and earnestness.

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#### SWAMI SREENIVASANANDA

Swami Sreenivasananda was a veteran votary of Nama-Sankirtan and he was familiarly known as the 'Jail-Swami' as he used to visit all the Central Jails in Tamil Nadu and conduct Kirtans along with the convicts, for their health, mental peace and transformation. This wonderful Seva he has been doing since 1960.

It was Swami Sreenivasananda who was responsible for the opening of the most active and dynamic Branch of the Divine Life Society in Tamil Nadu, viz., the Rasi-puram Branch, in the year 1962, where he served till 1969, when he was deputed to Pattamadai, the birth-place of Sri Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj.

By his tireless efforts, Sri Swami Sreenivasananda has got built at Pattamadai a Sivananda Mutt where a beautiful marble statue of Sri Gurudev is installed. He has

also got a Guest House opened, for the benefit of devotees visiting the birth-place of Sri Gurudev.

Swami Sreenivasananda was a medical-miracle. His survival with one lung only, doing Kirtans at the top of his melodious voice thrilling thousands, was indeed a miracle of Sri Gurudev. He attained Mahasamadhi on Friday, the 27th of November, 1981, at about 5.30 p.m. at Pattamadai, and Sri Gurudev has now accepted his disciple into His Eternal Abode.

#### OTHERS

Swami Sivananda had given Sannyasa to hundreds of seekers,—many of whom went away immediately and settled in different places to pursue their Sadhana and many of whom stayed with him for a brief period and then went away,—about whom little or no information is available. Mention is, however, made of the following who have rendered service to Sri Gurudev and his Mission in some form or the other:

Hariomananda (Ram Ram Baba), Swami Ramananda-I, Swami Ramananda-II, Swami Ramananda-III, Swami Ramananda-IV, Swami Brahmananda-I, Swami Bhumananda, Swami Omtatsatananda, Swami Swaroopananda, Swami Achyutananda, Swami Nityaswaroopananda, Swami Sivasankarananda, Swami Suryadevananda, Swami Sadasivananda, Swami Tejomayananda, Swami Amarananda, Swami Brahmananda-II, Swami Sivananda-Srinivasananda, Swami Satyajnanananda, Swami Shraddhananda.

#### *Sivananda on 'Peace'—16*

Peace, to be lasting and constructive, must be achieved through God. There can be no peace without the Lord or God. God is Peace. Root yourself in Peace or God. Now you are fit to radiate peace.



# The Birth Centenary

Countless were the distressed devotees who got miraculous benefit from Swami Sivananda. Innumerable were the troubled and tormented minds that received his benedictions that brought peace and happiness to them. Great was the number of seeking, longing and aspiring souls whose paths were lighted by the message and guidance of Swami Sivananda. Their hearts enshrined Sivananda, for ever and ever, in gratitude; and they were thrilled that the Birth-Centenary of their Master was approaching on the 8th of September, 1987. It was the intense longing of the devotees of Sri Gurudev all over the world to pay homage to their Master and they all expressed their eagerness to celebrate the occasion in a befitting manner, and were eager to know how the Sivananda Ashram Headquarters proposed to celebrate the same. Loving enquiries and even exhortations were being received constantly, in this connection, as early as 1982. In order to fulfil their ardent longings, a Meeting of the Board of Management of the Divine Life Society was specially convened for this purpose, inviting suggestions from its Members. The enthusiasm shown by the Members in giving their suggestions, in participating in the deliberations and in the finalisation of the Projects and Programmes for the Celebration of the Birth Centenary of Worshipful Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj was something praiseworthy. It was unanimously decided to form a Committee to plan, organise and conduct the Celebrations at the Headquarters, and it was known as the SWAMI SIVANANDA CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS CENTRAL COMMITTEE. Its constituent personnel are as follows:

I. PRESIDENT: H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj

II. VICE-PRESIDENTS:

- 1) H.H. Sri Swami Sahajananda  
(South Africa)
- 2) H.H. Sri Swami Madhavananda
- 3) H.H. Sri Swami Krishnananda
- 4) Dr. B.G. Sivananda-Adhvaryoo
- 5) Lala Sri Mukund Lal Sachdeva

III. PATRONS:

- 1) H.H. Sri Swami Hridayananda  
Mataji
- 2) H.H. Sri Swami Chinmayananda
- 3) H.H. Sri Swami Satchidananda  
(USA)
- 4) H.H. Sri Swami Shivapremananda  
(South America)
- 5) H.H. Sri Swami Vishnu Devananda  
(Canada)
- 6) H.H. Sri Swami Jyotirmayananda  
(USA)
- 7) Sri Lokumal K. Chellaram  
(Bombay)
- 8) Sri B.N. Kaul
- 9) Smt. Kumudini Devi
- 10) Sri Sivananda-Valentina
- 11) Sri B.K. Murjani
- 12) Sri J.K. Murjani
- 13) Dr. P.K. Rao
- 14) Sri Simonetta Colonna Cesaro
- 15) Smt. Mohini Giri

IV. GENERAL SECRETARY: Dr. Devaki Kuttu

V. JOINT SECRETARIES:

- 1) Sri U.V. Swadia
- 2) Sri D. Nagarkar
- 3) Sri N.V. Karthikeyan
- 4) Sri Narasimhulu
- 5) Sri A.V. Kuppaswami

VI. TREASURER: H.H. Sri Swami Dayananda

VII. MEMBERS:

- 1) H.H. Sri Swami Devananda
- 2) H.H. Sri Swami Shanmugananda
- 3) H.H. Sri Swami Vimalananda
- 4) Sri H.N. Ramatirtha
- 5) Sri Hubert Farrington
- 6) Sri Guy Des Pinardes
- 7) Sri Bahadur Singh Parmar.
- 8) Sri William Eilers
- 9) Sri Ramesh H. Thakkar
- 10) Sri Satchidananda Maithani
- 11) Dr. Gangadhar A. Bhatt
- 12) Sri Laxmikant M. Dave
- 13) Sri Sunil Kumar Patnaik, I.A.S.
- 14) Brig. L.N. Sabherwal
- 15) Sri A.N. Banerjee
- 16) Sri Venugopal Reddy
- 17) Sri Dilip Belare

Sub-Committees were also formed to look after the Finance, Publications, Medical Relief, Education, Social Welfare Activities, etc. The Central Committee was also authorised to co-opt Members and Executives, as and when necessary.

Incidentally, the Golden Jubilee of the founding of the Divine Life Society as a Trust, as well as the Platinum Jubilee (70th Birthday Anniversary) of H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, President of

this Society, both of which came off in the year 1986, happened to coincide with the Centenary Occasion, which significantly formed an added meaning to the holy celebration. It was, therefore, decided to have these celebrations spread over a year, i.e., from the 8th of September, 1986 to the 8th of September 1987,—the Sivananda Centenary Year.

It is well known that the mission of Sri Gurudev concentrated itself primarily in ameliorating the predominant difficulties of mankind, viz., ignorance, disease and poverty. Towards this end, Sri Gurudev instituted the Divine Life Society, which is dedicated to the service of humanity by way of introducing spiritual education and various other projects of social welfare. Keeping this objective in view, the Committee undertook various programmes under the aegis of the Birth Centenary Project, which may be classified under the following major heads:

- (a) Publications,
- (b) Medical Services,
- (c) Spiritual and Cultural Tours,
- (d) The Centenary Projects, and
- (e) The Centenary Year and Programmes.

### PUBLICATIONS

Swami Sivananda felt the paramount need to remove ignorance and enlighten humanity, by which alone mankind can hope to have peace and happiness. Towards this end he ceaselessly worked and brought out nearly 300 volumes covering almost all aspects of human life,—health, hygiene, education, morality, Religion, spirituality and Yoga,—in the simplest language possible. As many of his writings never saw a second edition and as some of his best-sellers were

in great demand, it was decided to reprint, under the aegis of the Birth Centenary Project, all such works of Sri Gurudev, *at least 100 titles*, both in *English* and *Hindi*, and make them available to the public during this occasion. It is a matter of great satisfaction that the Society was able to bring out as many as 94 titles before September, 1987, which are as follows:

#### In English

1. Kingly Science, Kingly Secret



2. Science of Yoga (Volume 1)
  3. Science of Yoga (Volume 2)
  4. Science of Yoga (Volume 3)
  5. Science of Yoga (Volume 4)
  6. Science of Yoga (Volume 5)
  7. Science of Yoga (Volume 6)
  8. Science of Yoga (Volume 7)
  9. Science of Yoga (Volume 8)
  10. Tantra Yoga, Kriya Yoga and Nada Yoga
  11. Jnana Yoga
  12. Conquest of Mind
  13. Dhyana Yoga
  14. Moksha Gita
  15. Spiritual Experiences
  16. Thought-Power
  17. The Bhagavad Gita
  18. Sure Ways for Success in Life and God-realisation
  19. Ethical Teachings
  20. Practical Lessons in Yoga
  21. Principal Upanishads
  22. Autobiography of Swami Sivananda
  23. Hindu Fasts and Festivals
  24. Stories from Yoga-Vasishtha
  25. Samadhi Yoga
  26. Inspiring Stories
  27. Mind, Its Mysteries and Control
  28. Concentration and Meditation
  29. Yoga Asanas
  30. Parables of Swami Sivananda
  31. Beauties of Ramayana
  32. The Science of Pranayama
  33. Elixir Divine
  34. Lord Siva and His Worship
  35. Stories from Mahabharata
  36. Health and Hygiene
  37. Bhakti and Sankirtan
  38. Religious Education
  39. Yoga Samhita
  40. Sadhana
  41. Sermonettes of Swami Sivananda
  42. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad
  43. Lectures on Yoga and Vedanta
  44. Health and Happiness
  45. Upanishad Drama
  46. Divine Life for Children
  47. Fourteen Lessons in Raja Yoga
  48. The Practice of Yoga
  49. Meditation on Om
  50. Practice of Karma Yoga
  51. What Becomes of the Soul After Death
  52. Home Remedies
  53. Vedanta for Beginners
  54. Divine Nectar
  55. Sarva Gita Sara
  56. How to Cultivate Virtues and Eradicate Vices
  57. Triple Yoga
  58. Kundalini Yoga
  59. Voice of the Himalayas
  60. Self-Knowledge
  61. Ananda Gita
  62. Yoga in Daily Life
  63. Bazaar Drugs
  64. Concentration and Meditation (Reprint)
  65. Mind, Its Mysteries and Control ( " )
  66. Students' Success in Life
  67. Essence of Yoga
  68. Light, Power and Wisdom
  69. Radha's Prem
  70. Japa Yoga
- In Hindi**
71. Balakon ke Liye Divya Jivan
  72. Japa Yoga
  73. Manasik Shakti
  74. Adhyatma Vidya
  75. Mind, Its Mysteries and Control
  76. Divine Life for Children
  77. Yoga Asanas
  78. Satsang Bhajan Mala
  79. Yoga Saar
  80. Pranayam Sadhana
  81. Sivananda Atma Katha

82. Guru Tattva
83. Yoga Sadhana
84. Thought-Power
85. Sadhana
86. Divya Jivan Saurabh
87. Dhyana Yoga
88. Maranottar Jivan
89. Yogabhyas Ka Muladhar
90. Swami Sivananda tatha Adhyatmik  
Navjagaran
91. Jyoti, Sakti aur Jnana
92. Chatra-Adhyatmic Sahitya
93. Sure Ways of Success in Life
94. Radha's Prem

Apart from the books mentioned above, a large quantity of free-literature was printed and distributed during the Centenary Celebration period. 5000 copies of each of the following 10 handy booklets have been printed for presentation to every participant in the final celebration on the 8th of September, 1987:

1. Divine Life
2. The Divine Name
3. Satsanga
4. Guru
5. Svadhyaya
6. The Bhagavad Gita
7. Srimad-Bhagavata
8. The Essence of Ramayana
9. Yoga
10. Vedanta

The Divine Life Society of South Africa, Durban, had donated very magnanimously to the printing of quite a large number of the publications listed above.

Swami Lakshmi Anand of the Divine Life Society, Fremantle Branch (Australia) had taken up, as her services to the Great Master, in the context of the holy Centenary, the publishing of 'The Life and Works of Swami Sivananda' in nine Volumes,—a compact presentation of the various major works of Swami Sivananda,—of which the

following six volumes have been released so far:

1. Sivananda: Biography of a  
Modern Sage
2. Health and Hatha Yoga
3. Karma Yoga
4. Raja Yoga
5. Bhakti Yoga
6. Vedanta

The matter was set by the members of the Fremantle Branch, as a labour of love, and she got the books beautifully printed in Hong Kong, to meet the standard required for worldwide distribution. The productions are excellent and are on the world market.

A very inspiring and beautiful coloured pictorial life-story of worshipful Gurudev was brought out in December, 1984 by Argus Central Enterprises, 16 Golf Links, New Delhi, with the material and guidance provided by the Divine Life Society, under the *Adarsh Chitra Katha* series. Important and inspiring incidents in the life of Sri Gurudev are highlighted through pictures, which also bring out the teachings of the Master very effectively.

This pictorial was subsequently translated and brought out into the Hindi, Telugu and other languages as well.

In commemoration of this Great Event of the Birth Centenary of the Master, a bumper volume (Souvenir) has been brought out by the Divine Life Society in *Hindi*, entitled *SWAMI SIVANANDA JANMA SATABDI SMRTI GRANTH*, containing articles by eminent writers on a vast variety of subjects, covering education, sects of Hinduism, religions of the world, systems of Indian Philosophy, life and teachings of Swami Sivananda and the philosophy of Swami Sivananda, etc. It is a *magnum opus* and will



be of immense benefit for research students as well as scholars.

A Commemoration Volume has also been brought out in *English* (this volume), mainly culled from the works of the Master, which will serve as a handy reference book on the essential teachings of the Master and about his Mission.

### Pictorial Album

Countless were the pictures of Swami Sivananda taken during his sojourn on this earth. This was another unique feature of this modern saint who posed for every occasion to fulfil the wishes of anyone, and each pose of his excels the other, so much so that one never gets tired of or satiated with seeing any number of pictures of his magnetic personality. Hence during this memorable occasion of his Birth Centenary, it

was considered befitting to select from among the thousands of his photos, a few hundred, arrange them and present them in the form of an Album. This was indeed a difficult job and it has been done remarkably well by one who is best suited for this work,—Sri Narasimhulu, who has been associated with the Ashram's Printing Press for over 30 years.

This excellently got up Pictorial Album is classified under different subjects and neatly arranged with suitable captions, and printed on art paper at Hong Kong, in which the labour of love of the Divine Life Society, Fremantle Branch (Australia) wafts its aroma throughout. The Divine Life Society of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur deserves all praise for its generosity to bear the entire cost of its production.

### MEDICAL SERVICES

Swami Sivananda was an embodiment of compassion who was moved by the sufferings of mankind. He served the sick heart and soul and alleviated their sufferings. Both before and after his Sannyasa Diksha, he served humanity in the capacity of a medical doctor. He started the Satyasewashram at Lakshman Jhula as early as 1925, served the sick Sadhus of Swarg Ashram, had a small dispensary opened as soon as the Divine Life Society was started in 1936, which became a full-fledged hospital when Dr. K.C. Roy joined the Ashram in 1950, to which was added the Sivananda Eye Hospital when Dr. Chellamma (Swami Sivananda-Hridayananda) joined the Ashram in 1956. Swami Sivananda established an Ayurvedic Pharmacy also in 1945, all for the service of mankind. It was, therefore, considered befitting to con-

siderably enhance the medical services under the Centenary Celebrations Scheme, for which purpose a Medical Sub-Committee was constituted with Dr. Devaki Kutty as its Convenor.

Under the management of Dr. Devaki Kutty, Chief Medical Officer, the existing hospital building has been thoroughly renovated and remodelled, so much so that it can compete with any modern hospital in its facilities and services. Thus the Operation Theatre was revamped on modern lines with an air-conditioner, generator, etc., instruments and equipments were added, and the out-patient department expanded. To add to these existing facilities a Hospital Expansion Project was undertaken under the auspices of the Centenary, which consisted of two phases. In the first phase an additional top-floor was built, over the exis-

ting Hospital building of ground and first-floor, consisting of a Ward of ten beds, a Physiotherapy Unit and a Clinical Laboratory. This work was completed and this wing was inaugurated on the 17th of December, 1986. The second phase consists of demolition of a portion of the present hospital's adjoining block known as the 'Ananda Kutir' which was becoming dilapidated as it is more than sixty years old, and put up a three-storeyed Annexe to the Hospital, with a five-bedded ward, two suites of residential rooms for doctors and a Central Medical Store Room for doctor's office. This second phase work has been taken up seriously and after the demolition work, construction work has been started and is progressing well. It is hoped to complete this work before the end of this year. At present there is only one general physician, Dr. Pradeep Kumar, but the scope of service is expected to be expanded by appointing additional staff in the near future.

The Sivananda Charitable Hospital has ever been a boon, right from its inception, to the poor people of the hill districts of Garhwal; and now in the Centenary period it was decided to extend the medical facilities and reach the people of the surrounding rural areas of Garhwal, by having three rural wings attached to the main hospital at the Ashram, for which purpose a Matador and an Ambulance-cum-mobile-Dispensary Van have been acquired.

The general public and philanthropists who are aware of the Hospital's services came forward readily and willingly to help the Society fulfil its projects when the details of the same were announced through the columns of the Society's monthly journal. Thus the Divine Life Society, Thane Branch collected and contributed a substantial sum of Rupees two lakhs towards

the Hospital Project. Donation of Rs. 5000/- for each bed (with full accessories like iron cot, mattress, blankets, linen, side-cupboard, spittoon stand, etc.) was received for all the 32 beds in no time from devotees. A sum of Rs. 50,000/- was donated by Dr. P. Krishnaji Rao of Vishakhapatnam (A.P.) towards Laboratory and Equipment. The Divine Life Society, Coimbatore Branch (Tamil Nadu) donated for the entire *Physiotherapy Unit*, the sum of Rs. 50,000/-. Sri Rudra Prasad Srivastava of Lucknow (U.P.) gave Rs. 30,000/- towards the cost of two beds and other equipments of the *Intensive Care Unit*. Sri Mohan Murjani, Murjani Marketing Group, of U.S.A., donated the entire cost of the Ambulance-cum-Mobile-Dispensary Van (Mahendra and Mahendra),—Rs. 1,43,000/-. A Matador was donated by the Divine Life Society Branch of Baroda. With the miscellaneous donations received, complete equipment required for Wards and O.P.D. including instruments, Sterilisers, Eye Department Equipments and other accessories, furniture, etc., were acquired. Thus the Medical Services Projects were all completed and commissioned much ahead of schedule, thanks to the overwhelming response from every quarter.

### Rural Medical Relief Camps

I. Anjani Sain,—an obscure village midway between Deo Prayag and Tehri, nestled in the Himalayan ranges,—was the first rural site chosen for a Women and Children's Medical Camp.

The camp was organised with the help of Swami Manmathan, a renowned social worker of this area, who hosted the medical team in his guest house and gave all facilities for the camp in his school. A total of 752 patients were examined,





Centenary Prachar Yatra Mandali which did unprecedented mass-scale dissemination of spiritual knowledge



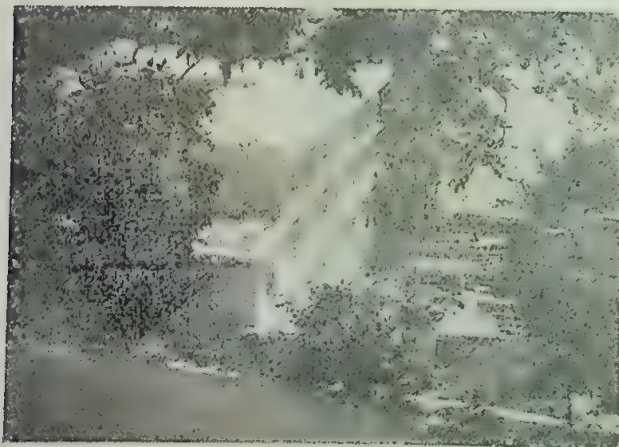
Swami Yogaswarupananda (seated) and Sri N.V. Karthikeyan (speaking) at a Centenary Celebration organised by Sri Atsu Kawabata (standing—also the interpreter) and Mrs. Junko Tomonaga (seated) at Tokyo, Japan



Gurudev's marble statue with the new marble lotus pedestal



Government of India Postal Stamp released on the 8th of September 1986



Sivananda Charitable Hospital Expansion Scheme—Phase I (on left) top floor completed and Phase II (on right) under construction



Sivananda Dharma Stambha at the entrance to Haridwar



screened for serious diseases and treated in 3½ days, from 26th to 29th September, 1986. Medicines worth about Rs. 5000/- were distributed free for the poor. Patients needing surgery were referred to big hospitals, while two of them were brought to Rishikesh and were operated at the Govt. Hospital. Seventyfive School Children were also medically examined.

The Team consisted of Dr. (Miss) D. Kutty, Smt. Uma Mudbhatkal and Sri Shankar.

II. A free Eye Relief Camp was organised at the Sivananda Ashram Headquarters on the 20th and 22nd December, 1986 where more than 200 patients were examined and 87 eye-operations were done by the famous Eye-Surgeon of Saurashtra, Dr. Sivananda Adhvaryoo. During this period, a free Dental Camp was also organised in which a large number of cases were treated by Dr. Labh Shankar Shukla of Rajkot, Gujarat.

III. A general Medical Camp was organised in Clement town, Dehra Dun, covering the adjoining five villages where very poor people live, on the 7th and 8th Feb., 1987. The Cantonment Board of Clement Town gave permission to hold the camp in their hospital, which was equidistant from the villages. Miss Brij Mohini Anand of M.K.P. College was mainly responsible for organising the camp. Local gynaecologist, eye specialist and paediatrician offered their services as well. Some of the medicine manufacturing companies came forward with supply of medicines. 325 women patients and 52 children were examined and given free medicines.

Brig. L.N. Saberwal hosted the medical team, which consisted of Dr. (Miss) D. Kutty, (Gynaecologist), Dr. (Smt) Jyoti

Sharma, (Gynaecologist), Dr. Mrs. Shashi Purohit, (Gynaecologist), Dr. Deevan Singh (Paediatrician), Dr. Oli (Eye Specialist), and Br. Sarojini (Para Medical).

IV. A mammoth Women's Medical Camp was organised at Sreenagar (Tehri-Garhwal Dist, in the Himalayas), with the help of Dr. Tomar and Satya Sai Sangatan from the 13th to 15th Feb., '87. In two and a half days, working till late in the evening, only 672 patients could be examined and the rush was so much that more than 300 patients had to go unattended, who tried to gherao the medical team which could leave Srinagar with difficulty. This was an exceptionally successful camp where medicines worth Rs. 6000/- were distributed free, which also brought home the need to take medical aid to the very doorsteps of the poor people in the Himalayan region.

V. A Women and Children's Camp was organised at Pattamadai, a village in Dist. Tirunelveli (Tamil Nadu) sanctified by the birth of Gurudev Sivananda, where a Sivananda Memorial Hospital is under construction. The new hospital site (though incomplete) was the venue of the camp. 729 patients were examined in three days, from 4th to 6th March, 1987. Medicines were freely supplied by different companies and the organisers had to spend only about Rs. 2500/-.

VI. A Multipurpose Medical Camp was conducted at Virnagar (Dt. Rajkot) Gujarat, where surgical facilities were available, from 22nd to 28th March, 87 organised by revered Dr. Sivananda Adhvaryoo and the Sivananda Mission, in which 102 women patients, 62 Orthopaedic cases and 200 general cases were examined and treated. Dr. Sivananda Adhvaryoo, Dr. N.K. Goel,

Dr. D. Kutty and Dr. Jesuben constituted the medical team.

### Eye Camps

VII. One Hundred and Eight Eye Camps were conducted by Dr. Sivananda Adhvaryoo, in different rural areas, including Pattamadai (Tamil Nadu), and Nayyaram (Kerala). The tremendous work done

by this single individual and his team is beyond human assessment. It is a miracle of Sri Gurudev whose abundant grace is on the doctor who, in his advanced age, is able to do such an astounding work with such zeal and enthusiasm. Lakhs of poor blind people have been benefited by the effort of this single man in the name of Gurudev Sivananda's Centenary.

### SPIRITUAL AND CULTURAL TOURS

Dissemination of spiritual knowledge was one of the main aims with which Sri Gurudev started the Divine Life Society. He himself used to undertake extensive Sankirtan tours throughout Northern India, as an effective means of propagation of the Divine Name, in the midst of which he delivered his message of love, service and Sadhana. Following the footsteps of the Master, an All-India Spiritual Prachara (Propagation) and National Integration Tour was undertaken by the following party which commenced its glorious and adventurous journey from the Holy Samadhisthan of Sri Gurudev on the sacred day of Vijayadasami, the 23rd of October, 1985:

1. Sri Swami Premananda
2. Sri Swami Devananda
3. Sri Swami Sivachidananda
4. Sri Swami Adhyatmananda
5. Brahmachari Sri Ramswarup  
(Yatra Organising Secretary)
6. Sri U.V. Swadia
7. Brahmachari Sri Atmajnana  
Chaitanya
8. Sri Dasarathi
9. Sri Chandi Prasad
10. Sri Mohan, Driver (Vehicle named  
"Ganga" No. GVD 7594)
11. Sri Dalpat Rai, Driver (Vehicle  
named "Yamuna" No. GAP 8843)

The party was given a warm send off by all the residents of the Ashram and the large number of Guests who had come to attend the Navaratri Puja Celebrations, who went in a Sankirtan-procession from the Ashram up to Rishikesh town. It was a thrilling and enthusiastic moment which filled everyone with joy.

The two vehicles by which the party toured throughout India carried a large quantity of free-literature, large-size photographs of the Master in various poses to set up exhibitions in all places, audio and video equipments and cassettes of the Master's voice and the Ashram activities, with the inspiring scenes of the holy Ganga and Himalayas, and above all the *sacred Padukas* of Sri Gurudev. Millions and millions of people throughout the length and breadth of India, including some very interior rural areas, had the rare and blessed opportunity of 'seeing' Swami Sivananda and offering worship to his sacred Sandals, in addition to the Satsangas, Bhajan and Kirtans, Yoga Asana Demonstrations, etc., conducted by the members of the party.

This tour consisted of two phases. In the first phase (from 23rd October, 85 to 28th March, 86) the party covered major portions of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Sikkim, Manipur, Assam, Orissa,



Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu (upto Kanya Kumari), Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Punjab and part of Haryana. In the travels through Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, the party was immensely helped by Swami Murugananda of the Ashram, Yogiraj Chandrasekharan of Rasipuram and Sri V. L. Nagaraj of Bangalore.

The second phase of the Prachar Yatra started on the 27th of April, '86 and concluded on 30th May, '86, during which period the party covered parts of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Union Territories of Delhi and Chandigarh.

Such a mass-scale and intensive form of dissemination of knowledge has never been done in the history of the Divine Life Society.

### Kumbha Mela Camp

The occasion of the Purna Kumbha Mela which occurs at Haridwar once in 12 years was taken advantage of to propagate the teachings and message of the Master to the millions of pilgrims that came there during April, '86. Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj stationed himself at the camp set up by the Divine Life Society in Haridwar, not minding his personal inconveniences, to broadcast the life-giving message of Sri Gurudev, thus enlivening the entire programme with his physical presence for about a month. The day's programme of the camp consisted of Brahmamuhurta (early morning) prayer, Prabhat-Pheri, Yoga Asana class, Likhit-Japa (Mantra-writing), Gita-recitation, spiritual discourses, Bhajans, Kirtans, Video-film show on Sri Gurudev's life and teachings, etc. A large quantity of free-literature was distributed to the cross-section of devotees that

attended the once-in-twelve-year Mela. The camp was organised most efficiently by Sri Swami Saketananda who is in himself a Sevak of versatile abilities.

### Foreign Tours

The President Swamiji, revered Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, undertook an extensive tour, under the auspices of the Centenary Celebrations, of U.S.A. and other countries from the beginning of December, '85 to the end of March, '86. Sita Frankel of Frederick, Maryland, U.S.A., and her very close associates formed a "Sivananda Centenary Committee" which invited Swamiji and organised all the programmes for the above period. Sri Swami Chidanandaji conducted many Satsangas, addressed the various Yoga Centres and Churches. He conducted a Spiritual Retreat from 8th to 13th December, '85 at the Claggett Doicesan Centre which was attended by many seekers from the United States as well as from Europe. Another Spiritual Retreat for six days from 27th December, '85 to 1st January, '86 was arranged by Sita Frankel, head of the Yoga Sadhana Mandir in Frederick, Maryland, which was a great success, participated and benefited by a large number of seekers from the United States and Canada. After that, from Washington D.C. Swamiji flew to Vancouver, B.C., Canada and then to Portland *en route* to Florence in Oregon. The Divine Life Society Florence Branch arranged a five-day Spiritual Retreat programme, from 10th January, 1986. Visiting Seattle and San Francisco where Swamiji gave many programmes, he went to Maui island in Hawaii where he spent a week, taking some rest. From Hawaii Swamiji flew to San Diego where the Nataraja Yoga Ashram organised a week-long Retreat from 28th January, '86. Then visiting the Sivananda Yoga Vedanta

Centre of Swami Vihnu at Los Angeles, Swamiji went to Dallas, Cincinnati and Nashville, where all he gave Satsangas. He then went to Weston, Connecticut, where he gave a three-day retreat in February, '86. At the Swami Sivananda Yoga Institute (an affiliated Divine Life Society Branch), Nassau (Bahamas), Mr. Hubert Farrington, its founder, organised a five-day retreat from 22nd to 27th Feb., '86. Swamiji then visited Miami, where he was received by his brother-monk Swami Jyotirmayananda, the Founder of Yoga Research Foundation. In Miami, Swamiji gave two talks, one at the Ponpano Park and the other at the University of Miami. From Miami, he went to Toronto and Montreal in Canada, where he conducted a number of Satsangas at the homes of devotees. Finally Swamiji came back to Frederick, where he observed the sacred Mahasivaratri with night-long vigil, worship and prayer, attended by a large number of devotees who had specially gathered for the holy occasion. On March 15th, 1986, Swamiji left for Lagos (Nigeria) en route to India, visiting London on the way. The entire tour was a very successful one, especially in connection with the Centenary propagation work, in which hundreds of seekers got spiritual training in retreats, numerous Yoga-students received the solace-giving message, innumerable householder-devotees had the blessing of hosting Swamiji and having his Satsanga. Swami Vimalanandaji ably assisted and served Swami Chidanandaji during the entire tour.

Swami Yogaswarupananda undertook a cultural tour in propagating Gurudev's teachings and participated in the Centenary celebration programmes organised by different Branches, Yoga Centres and devotees in many parts of the world. He also conduct-

ed Yoga Sessions (theory and practice) at Alberta University, Edmonton (Canada), Tri-State University, Angola (U.S.A.), Cornell University, Ithaca (U.S.A.) in addition to the interviews organised by different Radio, T.V., and Press for propagating Gurudev's teachings under the auspices of Birth Centenary Celebrations in various countries. Yoga Centres and devotees of Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj organised Yoga Seminars, Conferences and spiritual retreats at West Germany, Italy, Spain, Canada, U.S.A., Mexico, Japan, Hong Kong, Singapore and Australia. He returned to the Headquarters Ashram on 8th September, 1986, for attending the Birth Centenary Inauguration function.

Sri N.V. Karthikeyan, on invitation from certain Divine Life Society Branches and Yoga Centres, undertook a Spiritual and Cultural tour, under the auspices of the Centenary Celebrations, from May to December, '86. He had produced a documentary Video-film entitled "Swami Sivananda and His Mission" depicting the life and teachings of Swami Sivananda as well as the present activities of the Sivananda Ashram and the proposed projects under the Centenary Scheme. This video film was an effective means of propagating the Master's message to the hundreds of devotees that attended his Satsangas at the various Divine Life Society Branches, Yoga Centres, Schools, Colleges and homes of devotees in Singapore, Hong Kong, Japan (where Swami Yoga Swarupananda and he conducted Yoga Retreats in many places for a month), New Zealand, Australia, United States of America, Canada, Bahamas, Argentina, Venezuela, England, Belgium, West Germany, France, Spain, Italy and Switzerland. Sri Karthikeyan also conducted Satsangas and Pujas to the sacred Sandals (Padukas) of the holy



Master in all these places, which was a source of inspiration and granter of solace to countless devotees, to whom witnessing

such a solemn worship was something unique. Thus the Padukas and the video-film worked wonders throughout his tour.

## THE CENTENARY PROJECTS

### Auditorium

The accommodation available at the Samadhi Hall became inadequate even for the annual Sadhana-Week programmes, since some years. It was, therefore, considered necessary to have a suitable Auditorium for the venue of the Centenary Year Programmes. The large open space behind the Lord Sri Viswanath Mandir and in front of the Vaikuntha Dham building,—where the two great functions of the Diamond Jubilee of Swami Chidananda, the President, and Swami Krishnananda, the General Secretary, were conducted, erecting temporary stage and Pandal,—was chosen as a suitable place for the Auditorium, as it is in the main premises of the Ashram. However, to avoid congestion of the area, it was decided to have an Open-Air Auditorium, i.e., a huge stage with attached rooms for green-room facilities as a permanent structure where the programmes can be conducted, with open space in the front where temporary Pandal can be erected as and when required to accommodate the audience. Thus, an Open-Air Auditorium was constructed, simultaneously utilising the space under the raised-stage-platform-area for the putting up of a set of 6 rooms for the use of guests, which is called the Atithi Bhavan. This Atithi Bhavan cum Open-Air Auditorium complex was inaugurated by the President Swamiji Maharaj, revered Swami Chidananda, on the 5th of July, 1986. A number of programmes have been held here so far, including the inauguration of the Centenary Year, when the Postal Stamp was released.

### Bhagavata-Saptaha: Sri Rameshbhai Oza

Even as the Open-Air Auditorium was under construction, it had the fortune of being blessed with a Bhagavata Saptaha-Katha (spiritual discourses, with Bhajans and Music, on the Srimad Bhagavata Mahapurana) by the reputed *Kathavachak*, a learned scholar and devotee of God, Sri Rameshbhai Ozaji, from the 2nd to the 9th of October, 1985, which was arranged under the auspices of the Sivananda Centenary Celebrations and with the blessings, inspiration and active participation of H.H. Sri Swami Sampurnanandaji Maharaj (Mouni Baba) from Gujarat. It was such a thrilling discourse of three hours in the forenoon and three hours in the afternoon daily, that for the whole week all participants were in a state of divine ecstasy, so much so that there was a demand from the entire audience for more *Kathas* (spiritual discourses) by the learned scholar-devotee to be arranged every year till the Centenary.

### Bhajan Hall

The Bhajan Hall is one of the earliest buildings of the Ashram, built in 1942, where Sri Gurudev used to conduct the daily Brahmanuhurta classes, daily evening Satsangas, regular lectures and the Forest Academy Classes as well as the two annual Sadhana-Weeks, special functions, etc. This is also one of the most sacred of places in the Ashram where Sri Gurudev commenced the *Akhanda Maha Mantra Kirtan* on 3rd December, 1943, for peace and welfare of everyone everywhere, which is continuing

till this day. This Bhajan Hall was thoroughly renovated and the temporary tin-shed attached to it was converted into a hall type annexture, a permanent type of structure, for the convenience of the participants in the Maha-Mantra Kirtan.

### Sri Gurudev's Kutir

The Kutir on the banks of the Ganga in which Sri Gurudev lived till his last days belongs to the Swarg Ashram. As the building is a very, very old one, it required immediate renovation, which was undertaken and completed in a very short time. The Ghat,—the flight of steps from Kutir leading to the Ganga, the place where Sri Gurudev used to sit for his meditation, from where he used to feed the fish in the Ganga and also his holy dips,—and the Kutir were renovated so totally that anyone would be surprised at the marvellous work and would be at a loss to identify the place or even imagine what it could have been earlier. The entire credit for this noble work should go to the indefatigable effort and labour of Br. Ram Swaroop and his band of selfless Sevaks. The Ghat was inaugurated by revered Swami Krishnananda on the 26th of April, '87 in the presence of revered Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj and to the delight of the innumerable devotees assembled on the banks of the Ganga. Swami Krishnananda spoke on the glory and superhuman personality of Sri Gurudev who sanctified the Ghat by his presence and divine activities. A remembrance of those good old days with Sri Gurudev moved Swami Krishnananda so much that he lost himself in a mood of ecstasy, his voice was choked and his eyes filled with tears, due to which he had to abruptly conclude his talk saying, "I do not weep; but today I don't know what happen-

ed to me, I could not control my tears. I have become mad (lost in the thought of the holy Master)!" And many of the listeners were seen wiping their eyes, too!

The Kutir of Sri Gurudev was inaugurated by revered Swami Madhavanandaji on the 1st of June, 87, the auspicious day of the Sannyasa Anniversary of Sri Gurudev.

A unique Memorial Hall is being built on top of Sri Gurudev's Kutir on the road-level, where it is proposed to keep the relics of Swami Sivananda and have about 20 panels of visual depiction in terra-cotta on the life of Sri Gurudev. This will be known as the SIVANANDA DARSHAN MANDIR. The work is in progress and it is hoped to be completed before the end of this year.

### Centenary Memorial Arch

When Swami Sivananda left Swarg Ashram and came to this side of the Ganga where the Sivananda Ashram is situated now, this whole locality was nothing but a thick jungle visited often by wild animals. There were hardly any building except a few dilapidated structures. The power of his *Tapasya* was such that a dynamic spiritual colony has sprung up in that place, which attracts thousands of devotees, aspirants and Yoga-seekers from far and near, foreign and Inland. The jungle gave place to Sivananda Ashram and Sivanandanagar, at the entrance to which area a monumental memorial befitting the greatness of the Saint has been constructed. It is a massive structure, an Arch, on the highway at the entrance to Shivanandanagar, constructed at a cost of about seven lakhs, of which 2.5 lakhs have been donated by the T.T. Devasthanam, Tirupati (A.P.),—a befitting monument to the great Saint who put *Rishikesh* on the world-map.



### Sri Viswanath Mandir

Since a long time necessity for extending the area around the Ashram's Temple was felt, especially to accommodate the large number of devotees that come to participate in the annual functions like Maha-Sivaratri, Sri Krishna Janmashtami, Navaratri Puja, etc. Hence, this work of Temple-expansion was taken up by which the temple-area has been considerably enlarged by enclosing the vacant space around it, putting a concrete roof and beautifying it with marble-floor, decorative arches, carvings over the pillars, etc. In addition, the beautiful and artistic facade built in the South Indian traditional architecture at the front entrance to the Temple has brought a new dignified look to the Lord Sri Viswanath Mandir, which is so pleasing to the heart and elevating to the soul.

### Guru Mandir

The beautiful Italian-marble-statue of Sri Gurudev in the Guru Mandir, above the holy Samadhisthana, was seated on a flat pedestal, which was considered not so very pleasing and appropriate. This flat pedestal was, therefore, replaced by a grand and artistic lotus-pedestal made of marble, which has enhanced the majesty of the statue. Gurudev is now seated comfortably on the lotus, looking grander and solemn.

Both the Lord Sri Viswanath Mandir work and this lotus-pedestal were planned, designed and got executed by Br. Venugopal, an unassuming simple aspirant, who was ably assisted by Swami Ramakrishnananda.

### Sivananda Dharma Stambha

Similar to the "Sivananda Pillar" at the Ashram, a marble Pillar known as the "Sivananda Dharma Stambha" has been erected, on a triangular plot of land, where

the by-pass road bifurcates from the main Rishikesh-Haridwar Road at the entrance to Haridwar. The space has been donated by the Government and the marble Pillar was got done and donated by the Divine Life Society, Jaipur Branch. The consecration of the Dharma-Stambha was done by revered Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj on the 15th of December, 1986 in the presence of a distinguished audience.

### Audio Cassettes

Two different Audio Cassettes with the voice of Sri Gurudev were prepared and made available to the devotees, under the auspices of the Centenary. The first one contains the powerful voice of the Master, from the gramophone records of the early days which have a forceful, enchanting and sweet voice. The second one is a nicely edited 'Satsanga with Sri Gurudev', starting with Jaya-Ganesa Kirtan, song of instruction, a very inspiring message on 'Practical ways to Self-Realisation', and concluding prayers. This was edited from direct recording of the Master's voice made during the years before his entering into Mahasamadhi in July, 1963.

### Swami Sivananda Marg

The Ministry of Shipping and Transport has very graciously, and most fittingly, renamed the Lakshman Jhula Road,—the approximately four kilometre length of highway from Rishikesh town to Lakshman Jhula, which passes through the Sivananda Ashram,—as "Swami Sivananda Marg" in memory of the Saint of the Himalayas.

### Sivananda Jhula

The suspension bridge that spans the holy Ganga at Shivanandanagar connecting the Sivananda Ashram area with the Swarg Ashram area, which was built by the U.P.

Government to meet the heavy rush of millions of pilgrims for the Purna Kumbha Mela that took place in April, '86, was

named as *Sivananda Jhula* by the State Government of Uttar Pradesh, in sacred memory of the worshipful Master.

### THE CENTENARY YEAR AND PROGRAMMES

A *Rigveda-Samhita Parayana* was held at the Headquarters, to herald the commencement of the Centenary Year. The recitation commenced on the 28th August, 1986, and concluded on the 11th September, 1986. There was also the daily recitation of the *Soma-Pavamana* hymn from the *Rigveda* for a period of forty days, which concluded with a Yajna conducted along traditional lines. Such recitations were arranged for creating a powerful atmosphere charged with spiritual energy and harmony, for the blessedness of all.

The inauguration of the Centenary Year,—September, 1986 to September, 1987,—was made by H.H. Sri Swami Harihara Tirthaji Maharaj of Kailash Ashram with his inaugural address and benedictions on the 7th September, 1986. Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, the President, and other Mahatmas spoke on the occasion highlighting the life and teachings of the saint and sage, Swami Sivananda. The night Satsanga witnessed an extraordinary performance of a beautiful musical rendering by choir of about thirty artistes from the Gandharva Mahavidyalaya in New Delhi, which delighted the hearts of everyone.

On the 8th of September, 1986, the birth-date of Sri Gurudev, the Govt. of India released Sri Swami Sivananda's Commemoration Stamp (of the denomination of Rs. 2/-) at 22 important cities in the country. The central function for the release of the stamp was held at New Delhi in the hall of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, which was done by Honourable R. Venkataraman, the then

Vice-President of India. At the Sivananda Ashram Headquarters, after a grand *Paduka-Puja* at the Samadhi Shrine, the Postmaster-General of Uttar Pradesh released the stamp and paid his respects to Sri Gurudev's memory.

On the 9th of September, '86, there was a grand *Shobha Yatra* to Rishikesh town. Hundreds and hundreds of devotees who had come to the Ashram from different parts of India went in a procession to Rishikesh, singing the Lord's Name and dancing in ecstasy.

A *Ramayana Katha* was conducted by revered Sri Rameshbhai Ozaji from 10th to 18th September, 1986 in which he expounded the Sri Tulasi Ramacharita Manas to the great joy and divine fervour of hundreds of devotees that participated in the *Katha* programme. It would be recalled that this programme was arranged in response to the demand of devotees who enjoyed and appreciated his previous year's *Katha* and wanted to have similar *Kathas* every year.

From the 8th of September, 1986 and onwards, chanting of holy Mantras is going on in the Ashram premises at different hours of the day,—the Mantras chanted being *OM Namō Narayanaya*, the Mahamrityunjaya Mantra, *Om Namō Bhagavate Sivanandāya*, etc. Parayana of the sacred texts like Valmiki Ramayana, the Tulasi Ramacharita Manas, the Srimad Bhagavata, Sri Lalita-Sahasranama, the Durga Saptasati and the Sundara-Kanda are all done every day to generate peace-vibrations for the benefit of everyone, everywhere.



LORD SRI VISWANATH MANDIR (The Sivananda Pillar in front)



During Sri Gurudev's time



After the expansion and the new Facade

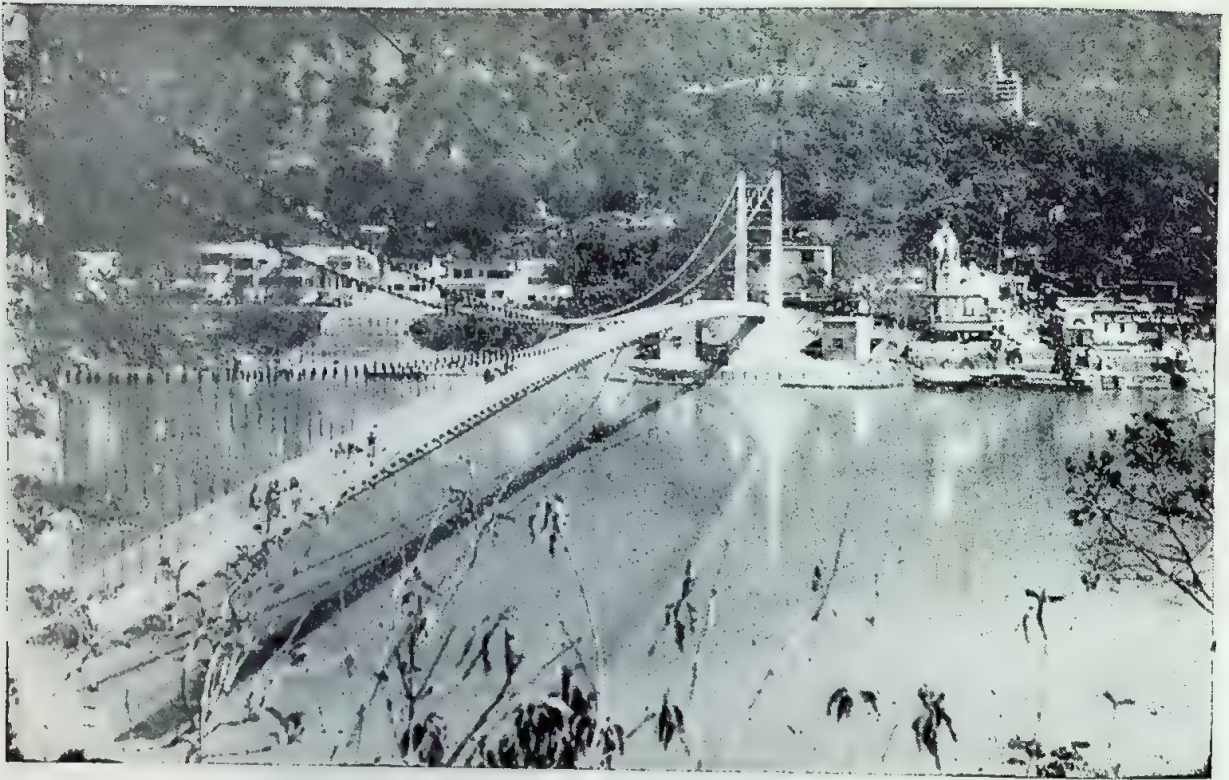
SRI GURUDEV'S KUTIR ON THE BANKS OF THE HOLY GANGA



During Gurudev's time



After the renovation



Sivananda Jhula



Sivananda Centenary Memorial ARCH  
nearing completion



Sivananda Darshan Mandir  
under construction



### Feeding

A special feeding (*Bhandara*) for one hundred and eight invited Mahatmas of Rishikesh area was conducted on the 8th of every month, from 8th September, 1986. On the following day, i.e., the 9th of every month, a special feeding of the poor people and wandering Sadhus was arranged, also from 9th September, 1986.

A *Krishna-Yajurveda Parayana* was conducted by Sri Gopala Ganapatigal of the T.T.D. Andhra Ashram of Rishikesh, from the 14th to the 29th of January, 1987.

### Discourses on the Srimad Bhagavadgita

In honour of the Centenary of Sri Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, the Headquarters Ashram arranged for an eighteen-day discourse on the Srimad Bhagavadgita by the reputed scholar-saint Sri Mahamandaleshwar Vidyananda Giriji Maharaj of the local Sri Kailash Ashram. The Swamiji spoke for four hours every day, i.e., two hours in the forenoon and two hours in the afternoon, for eighteen days from the 8th of April, 1987 at the holy Shrine of Swami Sivananda in the Ashram. A scholar par excellence, expert in all the Scriptures and profound in the grasp of the great subject, this Mahamandaleshwar Swamiji took up an analysis of the entire text of the Bhagavadgita verse by verse, giving the grammatical, linguistic and textual meaning and significance of the verse first and pointing out at the same time the correlation of a verse with other verses in the text appearing elsewhere but having a relevance from the point of view of the subject treated. The participants,—Sadhaks, guests of the Ashram, local Sannyasins from different Ashrams including the Kailash Ashram and the devotee-public of Rishikesh,—throughout attended the discourse with rapt attention, since

rarely does one get an opportunity to attend a course of lectures on such a complicated Scripture as the Bhagavadgita in such detail and with such mastery.

The entire Ashram felt that this was a kind of unprecedented spiritual feast and a veritable festival of knowledge, a *Jnana-Yajna* that charged the whole atmosphere with an elevated spirit and a sumptuous catering for the fulfilment of everyone's soul.

### Bhagavata-Saptaha: Sri Manharlalji

A Srimad Bhagavata Saptaha was conducted by the revered Pandit Manharlalji of Jamnagar, a great Vidwan and an adept at Srimad Bhagavad Katha, from the 18th to the 25th of May, 1987, at the Ashram Headquarters. This great Pandit, Sri Manharlalji, is the founder of 100 Gita Vidyalayas in Saurashtra and has popularised Sanskrit studies and the Gita amongst children there, some of whom had accompanied him to the Ashram. The *Katha* was enjoyed by everyone as the narrations emanated from the heart of one who is soaked in the love of God.

### H.H. Swami Ranganathanandaji's visit

Another great event, under the auspices of the Centenary Celebrations, was the visit of His Holiness Sri Swami Ranganathanandaji Maharaj, Head of the Ramakrishna Mission at Hyderabad. This great scholar and Vedantin graciously condescended to visit the Ashram, on completion of a period of rest for which he had come to the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashram at Kankhal (Haridwar), and delivered an inspiring, though short, talk on the greatness of Vedanta and its practice in daily life, on the 27th of May, 1987. He was accompanied by H.H. Sri Swami Bhashyananda of Chicago R.K. Mission and Sri Swami Kir-

tidananda of the R.K. Mission, Chandigarh.

A Parayana (Chanting) of the entire *Shukla Yajurveda* was conducted at the Viswanath Mandir of the Ashram by Rev. Parashuram Ganapathi of Madras and Sri Narayana Sharma of Kancheepuram. The week-long Parayana concluded with 'Purnahuti Havan' on the 29th of May, 1987.

### 100 Days' Programme

The climax of the Centenary Year and the entire Centenary Celebrations was a 100 days' programme, to mark the hundred years of the advent of the Saint, in a most concentrated form, from the 1st of June, 87, which also happens to be the Sannyasa Anniversary day of Sri Gurudev.

The Inauguration of the 100 days' programme was done with great éclat and grandeur and with immense solemnity. The early morning meditation session was followed by a *Prabhat Pheri* (procession with the Chanting of Mantras) in which hundreds of devotees went to the *Kutir* in Swargashram where Sri Gurudev lived and did Tapasya in those early days. It was an unforgettable experience, the first of its kind since the construction of the 'Sivananda Jhula'.

In the forenoon there was a great congregation of Mahamandaleshwars of Haridwar, Rishikesh and Swargashram areas at the Samadhi Hall, who paid reverential tributes to the Great Master, Swami Sivananda, whom many of them knew by personal association. All these invited guests were given traditional welcome and this august gathering was indeed a sight to see.

In the afternoon, after the inauguration

of Sri Gurudev's *Kutir* by Swami Madhavanandaji Maharaj, there was the unique 'Boat Kirtan', reminding everyone of the good old days when Sri Gurudev himself used to do such Boat Kirtans. Five boats filled with hundreds of Swamis, Ashramites and guest-devotees went up and down the holy Ganga for an hour chanting, singing and ecstatically shouting the Name of the Lord, thus surcharging the whole atmosphere and to the joy of thousands of pilgrims on both side of the Ganga witnessing this rare phenomenon. The function concluded with a mass-scale Ganga Arati when hundreds of lighted-flower-boats were floated down the holy river. Indeed, the 1st June, 1987, was a most memorable day, heralding the 100 days' programme, details of which are given below for the edification of the glory of the holy Master:

### 100 DAYS' PROGRAMME

FROM 1ST JUNE TO 8TH SEPTEMBER, 1987

#### June 1987

1st

Sannyasa Diksha Anniversary of Swami Sivananda, and the Inauguration of the 100 days' Celebrations.

3rd—11th

Ramayana Navahna Katha  
by Rev. Sri Manharlalji Maharaj

14th—30th

Discourses by Mahamandaleshwars, Mahatmas and Scholars (From Rishikesh and Haridwar)

#### July 1987

1st—3rd

Yoga Sessions—Theory and Practice of Important Yogas



4th—8th

Discourses on Spiritual Themes by  
H.H. Sri Swami Madhavanandaji Maharaj

11th

Holy Sri Guru Purnima

12th—18th

Annual Sadhana Saptaha (Sadhana Week)

19th

Twenty-Fourth Anniversary of the Punyatithi Aradhana of H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj

25th—31st

Discourses on the Life and Teachings of  
Sri Gurudev Swami Sivananda, by  
H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj

### August 1987

1st—3rd

Discourses on "Teachings of Swami Sivananda" by H.H. Sri Swami Premanandaji Maharaj

2nd—8th

Discourses on "The Vision of Life," by  
H.H. Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj

4th—9th

Discourses on Ramayana  
by Rev. Sri Ram Kinkar Upadhyayaji

10th—12th

Bhajan and Kirtan Session, by  
Sri Pithukuli Muruga Dasji Maharaj

13th—17th

Discourses on "Gita & Gurudev Sivananda"  
by H.H. Sri Swami Jivanmuktanandaji

15th—17th

Discourses on "Amrita Bindu Upanishad"  
by H.H. Sri Swami Vidyanandaji Maharaj

of Sri Vyasa Ashram, Yerpedu (Andhra Pradesh)

18th—19th

Hari Katha (Musical Discourse)  
by Sant. Kesavadasji

### September 1987

1st—3rd

Cultural and Spiritual Conference  
Subject and Speakers being finalised.

4th—6th

Seminar on Spiritual and Humanitarian  
Values. Specially invited scholars will address the audience on the subjects chosen, as follows:

4th

Evaluation of Indian Culture in the context of Modern Times.

5th

Swami Sivananda's Concept of Spiritual Life

6th

Spiritual Ideals and Social Values

The Night Session on all these days will consist of Devotional Music, Bhajans, Dance, and Drama on devotional themes, by eminent artistes.

7th

Shobha Yatra

8th September, 1987

Grand Finale

Holy Birthday Centenary:  
Prabhat-Pheri

Special Worship (Brihad Paduka-Puja),  
Satsanga, Lecutres, Ganga Puja and Arati,  
and Cultural programmes.

### Post-Centenary Projects

Apart from the above programmes which will come to a grand finale on the 8th September, 1987, there are certain projects which would be carried on in the years to come as a continuation of the Centenary Year Programme, to perpetuate the memory of the God-Man, Swami Sivananda. In this connection the Centenary Celebration Committee plans:

a. To institute a Corpus Fund for Social Welfare, for extending educational facilities to the poor, and helping victims of natural calamities.

b. To establish special Chair|Chairs and provide facilities in the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy at the Headquarters of the Society; Professors who are specialists,

from Universities and important educational institutions in and outside India, will be invited to have cultural and spiritual study exchange.

c. To set aside a certain amount of fund to award a prize to a scholar who produces an original doctoral dissertation on the teachings of Sri Gurudev who brought about a spiritual renaissance and philosophical reformation in the Twentieth Century.

d. To invest a sum of Rupees One Lakh in a Capital Fund with the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, for instituting an annual "Swami Sivananda Centenary Memorial Lecture", by a competent person, highlighting Ancient Indian Culture and Heritage.





**EPILOGUE**

**Heart of  
Sivananda's Teachings**





# Heart of Sivananda's Teachings

## TWENTY IMPORTANT SPIRITUAL INSTRUCTIONS

*These twenty instructions contain the very essence of all Yoga Sadhana. Karma, Bhakti, Jnana and Yoga will all come to one who follows them whole-heartedly. They are the Keys to quick development and culture of the physical, mental, moral and spiritual self of man.*

### 1. BRAHMAMUHURTA

Get up at 4 a.m. daily. This is Brahmamuhurta, which is extremely favourable for Sadhana. Do all your morning spiritual Sadhana during this period, from 4 a.m. to 6.30 or 7 a.m. Such Sadhana gives quick and maximum progress.

### 2. ASANA

Sit in Padma, Siddha or Sukha Asana for Japa and meditation for half an hour, facing east or north. Increase the period gradually to three hours. Do Sirshasana and Sarvangasana for Brahmacharya and health. Take light physical exercise such as walking, etc., regularly. Do 20 rounds of easy, comfortable Pranayama.

### 3. JAPA

Repeat any Mantra such as pure Om or Om Namō Narayanaya, Om Namah Shivaya, Om Namō Bhagavate Vasudevaya, Om Saravanabhavaya Namah, Sita Ram, Sri Ram, Hari Om, or Gayatri according to your taste or inclination from 108 times to 21,600 times daily (200 Malas 108 times is 21,600). Devotees of Christ may repeat the name Jesus or Hail Mary, Mother of Jesus. Parsis, Sikhs and Mohammedans may select a name or Mantra from the Zend Avesta, Granth Sahib or Koran respectively.

## 4. DIETETIC DISCIPLINE

Take Sattvic food. Give up chillies, tamarind, garlic, onions, sour articles, oil, mustard, asafoetida. Observe moderation in diet (Mitahara). Do not overload the stomach. Give up those things which the mind likes best, for a fortnight once or twice in a year. Eat simple food. Milk and fruits help concentration. Take food as medicine to keep the life going. Eating for enjoyment is sin. Give up salt and sugar for a week or a fortnight. You must be able to live on rice, dal and bread without any pickle. Do not ask for extra salt for dal and sugar for tea, coffee or milk. People taking non-vegetarian diet should try their best to gradually give up flesh eating as completely as possible. They will be immensely benefited.

## 5. MEDITATION ROOM

Have a separate meditation room under lock and key. If this is not possible then a corner of the room should be set apart with a small cloth screen or curtain drawn across.

## 6. SWADHYAYA

Study systematically the Gita, Ramayana, Bhagavatam, Vishnu Sahasranama, Lalita Sahasranama, Adityahridaya, Upanishads, Yoga Vasishta, Bible, Imitation of Christ, Koran, Zend Avesta, the Gathas, Tripitaka and other religious books from half an hour to one hour daily, and have Suddha Vichara (pure thoughts).

## 7. ELEVATE THE MIND

Get by heart some prayer Slokas, Stotras and repeat them as soon as you sit on the Asana before starting Japa or meditation. This will elevate the mind quickly.

## 8. BRAHMACHARYA

Preserve the vital force (Veerya) very, very carefully. Veerya is God in motion or manifestation (Vibhuti). Veerya is all power. Veerya is all money. Veerya is the essence of life, thought and intelligence. This instruction is not for bachelors only. Householders also must follow this, as far as possible. They must be extremely moderate in their marital connections with their wives.

## 9. CHARITY

Do charity regularly every month or even daily according to your means. Never fail in this item. If necessary forego some personal wants but keep up this charity regularly.

## 10. HAVE SATSANGA

Give up bad company, smoking, meat and alcoholic liquors entirely. Have constant Satsanga. Do not develop any evil habits. Deliberately exert to develop positive virtuous qualities.

## 11. FAST

Fast on *Ekadasi* or live on milk and fruits only. Christians must fast on alternate Sundays, Muslims on alternate Fridays, and Parsis on a suitable day every fortnight.

## 12. JAPA MALA

Have a Japa Mala (rosary) around your neck or in your pocket or underneath your pillow at night. This will remind you of God. Twirl the beads now and then or whenever you have some leisure.

## 13. OBSERVE MOWNA

Observe Mowna (vow of silence) for a couple of hours daily. Do not make gestures and inarticulate noises during the period of silence.

## 14. DISCIPLINE OF SPEECH

Speak the truth at any cost. Speak little. Speak sweetly. Always utter encouraging words. Never condemn, criticise or discourage. Do not raise your voice and shout at little children or subordinates.

## 15. BE CONTENT

Reduce your wants. If you have four shirts, reduce the number to three or two. Lead a happy, contented life. Avoid unnecessary worry. Be mentally detached. Live simply and develop high thinking. Think of those who do not possess even one-tenth of what you have. Share what you have with others.

## 16. PRACTISE LOVE

Never hurt anybody—*Ahimsa Paramo Dharmah* (Non-injury is the highest virtue). Control anger through love, forgiveness (*Kshama*) and compassion (*Daya*).

## 17. BE SELF-RELIANT

Do not depend upon servants. Self-reliance is the highest of all virtues.

## 18. HAVE SELF-ANALYSIS

Think of the mistakes you have committed during the course of the day, just before retiring to bed (self-analysis). Keep a daily spiritual diary and self-correction register as Benjamin Franklin did. Maintain daily routine and resolve-form.

## 19. DO YOUR DUTY

Remember that death is awaiting you at every moment. Never fail to fulfil your duties. Have pure conduct (*Sadachara*).

## 20. REMEMBER GOD

Think of God as soon as you wake up and just before you go to sleep, and at all other times whether engaged in any work or not. Repeat His Name always.



*This is the essence of all spiritual Sadhana. This will lead you to Moksha. All these Niyamas or spiritual canons must be rigidly observed. You must not give any leniency to the mind.*

\* \* \*

## SADHANA TATTWA

OR

### THE SCIENCE OF SEVEN CULTURES

#### For Quick Evolution of the Human Soul

(a) *An ounce of practice is better than tons of theory. Practise Yoga, Religion and Philosophy in daily life and attain Self-realisation.*

(b) *These thirty-two instructions give the essence of the Eternal Religion (Sanatana Dharma) in its purest form. They are suitable for modern busy householders with fixed hours of work. Modify them to suit your convenience and increase the period gradually.*

(c) *In the beginning take only a few practicable resolves which form a small but definite advance over your present habits and character. In case of ill-health, pressure of work or unavoidable engagements replace your active Sadhana by frequent remembrance of God.*

#### HEALTH CULTURE

1. Eat moderately. Take light and simple food. Offer it to God before you eat. Have a balanced diet.

2. Avoid chillies, garlic, onions, tamarind, etc., as far as possible. Give up tea, coffee, smoking, betels, meat and wine entirely.

3. Fast on Ekadasi days. Take milk, fruits or roots only.

4. Practise Yogic Asanas or physical exercises for fifteen to thirty minutes. Take

a long walk or play some vigorous games daily.

#### ENERGY CULTURE

5. Observe silence (Mowna) for two hours daily and four to eight hours on Sundays.

6. Observe celibacy according to your age and circumstances. Restrict the indulgence to once a month. Decrease it gradually to once a year. Finally take a vow of abstinence for whole life.

#### ETHICAL CULTURE

7. Speak the TRUTH. Speak little. Speak kindly. Speak sweetly.

8. Do not injure anyone in thought, word or deed. Be kind to all.

9. Be sincere, straightforward and open-hearted in your talks and dealings.

10. Be honest. Earn by the sweat of your brow. Do not accept any money, thing or favour unless earned lawfully. Develop nobility and integrity.

11. Control fits of anger by serenity, patience, love, mercy and tolerance. Forget and forgive. Adapt yourself to men and events.

#### WILL CULTURE

12. Live without sugar for a week or a month. Give up salt on Sundays.

13. Give up cards, novels, cinemas and clubs. Fly from evil company. Avoid discussions with materialists. Do not mix with persons who have no faith in God or who criticise your Sadhana.

14. Curtail your wants. Reduce your possessions. Have plain living and high thinking.

#### HEART CULTURE

15. Doing good to others is the highest religion. Do some selfless service for a few hours every week, without egoism or expect-

tation of reward. Do your worldly duties in the same spirit. Work is worship. Dedicate it to God.

16. Give two to ten per cent of your income in charity every month. Share what you have with others. Let the world be your family. Remove selfishness.

17. Be humble and prostrate to all beings mentally. Feel the Divine Presence everywhere. Give up vanity, pride and hypocrisy.

18. Have unwavering faith in God, Gita and your Guru. Make a total self-surrender to God and pray: "Thy Will be done; I want nothing". Submit to the Divine Will in all events and happenings with equanimity.

19. See God in all beings and love them as your own self. Do not hate anyone.

20. Remember God at all times or, at least, on rising from bed, during a pause in work and before going to bed. Keep a Mala in your pocket.

#### PSYCHIC CULTURE

21. Study one chapter or ten to twenty-five verses of Gita with meaning daily. Learn Sanskrit, at least sufficient to understand the Gita in original.

22. Memorise the whole of Gita, gradually. Keep it always in your pocket.

23. Read Ramayana, Bhagavata, Upanishads, Yogavasishtha or other religious books daily or on holidays.

24. Attend religious meetings, Kirtans and Satsangas of saints at every opportunity. Organise such functions on Sundays or holidays.

25. Visit a temple or place of worship at least once a week and arrange to hold Kirtans or discourses there.

26. Spend holidays and leave-periods, when possible, in the company of saints or practise Sadhana at holy places in seclusion.

#### SPIRITUAL CULTURE

27. Go to bed early. Get up at 4 o'clock. Answer calls of nature, clean your mouth and take a bath.

28. Recite some prayer and Kirtan Dhwanis. Practise Pranayama, Japa and meditation from five to six o'clock. Sit in Padma, Siddha, or Sukha Asana throughout, without movement, by gradual practice.

29. Perform your daily Sandhya, Gayatri Japa, Nityakarma and worship, if any.

30. Write your favourite Mantra or name of God in a notebook for ten to thirty minutes.

31. Sing names of God (Kirtan), prayers, Stotras, and Bhajans for half to one hour at night, with family and friends.

32. Make annual resolves on above lines. Regularity, tenacity and fixity are essential. Record Sadhana in a spiritual diary daily. Review it every month and correct your failures.

\* \* \*

#### SONG OF EIGHTEEN 'ITIES'

Serenity, regularity, absence of vanity,  
Sincerity, simplicity, veracity,  
Equanimity, fixity, non-irritability,  
Adaptability, humility, tenacity,  
Integrity, nobility, magnanimity,  
Charity, generosity, purity,  
Practise daily these eighteen 'ities'.  
You will soon attain immortality.  
Brahman is the only real entity.  
Mr. So and so is a false non-entity.  
You will abide in Eternity and Infinity,  
You will behold unity in diversity.  
You cannot attain this in the university.  
You can attain this in the Forest University.

#### THE EIGHTEEN 'ITIES'

*For everyone's success in life, and especially for an aspirant's success in spiri-*



tual life, it is essential that he should develop certain cardinal qualities. Virtue is power, strength and the key to peace. A virtuous man is ever happy, peaceful and prosperous. People ask me for a specific mention of the virtues that one should develop. The "Song of Eighteen Ities" enumerates the virtues that everyone should cultivate. Take up any one virtue and develop it to a very high degree of perfection; eradicate in toto its opposite evil quality even in its most subtle form. Meditate on these virtues, their benefits, the methods of cultivating these virtues. The eighteen "Ities" are:—

#### 1. SERENITY

Be tranquil within. Let that inner peace and joy radiate through a serene countenance. A serene countenance is peaceful, smiling, serious and does not betray any violent emotions. It is like the surface of a still lake.

#### 2. REGULARITY

Be regular in your daily habits, work and spiritual practices. Get up at a particular time daily; go to bed at a particular time. Be clock-like in your daily activities. You will be free from worry, anxiety, haphazard and shabby work. You will do the right thing at the right moment.

#### 3. ABSENCE OF VANITY

Do not boast of your birth, position, qualifications and spiritual attainments. Remember the evenescent nature of all things phenomenal. Praise others. See good in all. Treat even the lowliest creatures as your equal.

#### 4. SINCERITY

Let your words agree with your thoughts; let your actions agree with your

words. Let there be harmony among your thoughts, words and actions.

#### 5. SIMPLICITY

Be artless. Be simple in your speech. Do not twist words and topics. Be plain; avoid diplomacy, cunningness and crookedness. Be simple in your dress. Be simple in your food. Develop a childlike nature.

#### 6. VERACITY

Be truthful. Stick to your promises. Do not exaggerate. Do not twist facts. Think twice before you speak. Speak truthfully, speak sweetly; be precise in what you say.

#### 7. EQUANIMITY

Be calm. Bear patiently insult, injury, suffering, failures and disrespect. Do not be elated by praise, pleasure, success and honour. Look upon both with equal vision. Behave alike towards friends and foes. Never let a thing disturb your inner peace.

#### 8. FIXITY

Remember that you can achieve nothing if you are fickle-minded. Do Vichar (enquiry). Choose your goal or ideal. Always remember that. Never let it go out of your mind even for a moment.

#### 9. NON-IRRITABILITY

Irritability is the precursor of violent outburst of anger. Watch for the disturbance in the mental equilibrium. Watch for the ripples of anger that might rise in the lake of the mind. Quell them then and there. Do not allow them to assume greater proportions. Then you will attain the non-irritable state of peace and love.

#### 10. ADAPTABILITY

Understand the nature of the people with whom you come into contact. Adjust

your mode of approach to them, your conduct towards them in such a way as to be pleasing to them. Joyfully bear with the eccentricities of other people. Always react in a harmonious manner. Serve all and love all. Have the feeling that the Lord is in all as the Self of all.

#### 11. HUMILITY

Respect everybody. Bow with folded hands before everybody. Do not talk in a loud voice before elders and venerable persons. Look at the toes while you walk. See the Lord in all, and feel that you are His servant and so the servant of all. Consider none as inferior to you.

#### 12. TENACITY

This is the natural friend of fixity. Once you have fixed your aim and chosen your path, stick to it. Do not waver. Be steadfast. Never compromise on your fundamental principles. Have the mental attitude: "I may give up life; but I will not swerve from the path; I will not break my vows."

#### 13. INTEGRITY

Develop an integral personality. Tie all loose ends of your character. Become a man of high moral principles. Lead a life of righteousness. Let righteousness waft its sweet fragrance from you. Everyone will trust you, obey you, respect you and revere you.

#### 14. NOBILITY

Shun mean-mindedness as dung and poison. Never look into the defects of other people. Appreciate everyone's good qualities. Be dignified in bearing. Never stoop to low thoughts, words and actions.

#### 15. MAGNANIMITY

Take a broad view of things. Ignore

the faults of others. Be great and broad-minded in whatever you do. Avoid idle talk and childish prattle. Let not the mind dwell on little and insignificant things.

#### 16. CHARITY

Give, give and give. Radiate thoughts of good-will and love. Forgive the faults of others. Bless the man who injures you. Share what you have with all. Feed and clothe all. Disseminate spiritual knowledge to one and all. Use the material wealth, knowledge, spiritual wisdom that you possess as a divine trust, entrusted to you by God, to be distributed among His children.

#### 17. GENEROSITY

In whatever you give be liberal. Have a large heart. Do not be stingy. Take delight in the joys of others, in making others happy. Generosity is a sister-virtue of charity. Generosity is the fulfilment of charity, magnanimity and nobility.

#### 18. PURITY

Be pure at heart. Eradicate lust, anger and greed and other evil qualities. Be pure in your thoughts; let no evil thought enter your mind. Think of God always; think of the well-being of all. Be pure in your words; never utter a vulgar, harsh or unkind word. Be pure in body also; keep it clean. Keep your dress and surroundings clean. Observe the rules of physical, mental, moral and spiritual hygiene.

*These eighteen "Ities" will pave the way for you to march into the kingdom of God. They will open out the gates of Immortality for you. You will achieve great success in this life on earth also. A man who possesses these qualities in a very large measure is a saint indeed, who will be respected, adored and worshipped by one and all.*



**MAHA MRITYUNJAYA MANTRA**

॥ महामृत्युञ्जयमन्त्रः ॥

ॐ त्र्यम्बकं यजामहे सुगन्धिं पुष्टिवर्धनम् ।

उर्वारुकमिव बन्धनान्मृत्योर्मुक्षीय मामृतात् ॥

*Om Tryambakam yajamahe  
Sugandhim pushtivardhanam  
Urvaarukamiva bandhanat  
Mrityormuksheeya maamritat*

**MEANING**

We worship the three-eyed One (Lord Siva) Who is fragrant and Who nourishes well all beings; may He liberate us from death for the sake of Immortality even as the cucumber is severed from its bondage (to the creeper).

**BENEFITS**

1. This Maha-Mrityunjaya Mantra is a life-giving Mantra. In these days, when life is very complex and accidents are an everyday affair, this Mantra wards off death by snake-bite, lightning, motor-accidents, fire-accidents, cycle-accidents, water-accidents, air-accidents and accidents of all descriptions. Besides, it has a great curative effect. Again, diseases pronounced incurable by doctors are cured by this Mantra, when chanted with sincerity, faith and devotion. It is a weapon against disease. It is a Mantra to conquer death.

2. It is also a Moksha-Mantra. It is Lord Siva's Mantra. It bestows long life (Deergha Ayus), peace (Shanti), wealth (Aishwarya), prosperity (Pushti), satisfaction (Tushti) and Immortality (Moksha).

3. On your birthday, repeat one lakh of this Mantra or at least 50,000; perform Havan and feed Sadhus, the poor and the sick. This will bestow on you long life, peace and prosperity.

**MAHA MANTRA**

हरे राम हरे राम राम राम हरे हरे ।

हरे कृष्ण हरे कृष्ण कृष्ण कृष्ण हरे हरे ॥

*Hare Rama Hare Rama  
Rama Rama Hare Hare  
Hare Krishna Hare Krishna  
Krishna Krishna Hare Hare*

**(Thars: Maha Mantra)**

Eat a little, drink a little, talk a little,  
sleep a little,  
Mix a little, move a little, serve a little,  
rest a little,  
Do Asana a little, Pranayama a little,  
reflect a little, do Vichar a little,  
Do Japa a little, do Kirtan a little, write  
Mantra a little, Meditate a little.

**SONG OF UPADESAMRITAM****(Thars: Sunaja)****I—YOGA OF SYNTHESIS**

Serve, love, give, purify, meditate, realise.  
Be good, do good, be kind, be compassionate.

**II—ETHICS**

Be bold, be pure, be wise, be virtuous,  
Be honest, be sincere, be truthful.  
Be patient, be tolerant, be obedient,  
Be simple, be humble, be noble, be gentle.  
Adapt, adjust, accommodate.  
Bear insult, bear injury, highest Sadhana.

**III—ESSENCE OF VEDANTA**

Enquire 'Who am I', know the Self,  
and be free.  
Be still, be quiet, know thy Self.  
Find the Hearer, find the Seer,  
find the Knower.  
You are not this body, not this mind;  
Immortal Self you are.

\* \* \*

## THE SPIRITUAL DIARY (WEEKLY)

The Spiritual Diary is a whip for goading the mind towards righteousness and God. If you regularly maintain this diary you will get solace, peace of mind and make quick progress in the spiritual path. Maintain a daily diary and realise the marvelous results.

No	Questions	Month.....							Total
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
1	When did you get up from bed?								
2	How many hours did you sleep?								
3	How many Malas of Japa?								
4	How long in Kirtan?								
5	How many Pranayamas?								
6	How long did you perform Asanas?								
7	How long did you meditate in one Asana?								
8	How many Gita Slokas did you read or get by heart?								
9	How long in the company of the wise (Satsanga)?								
10	How many hours did you observe Mouna?								
11	How long in disinterested selfless Service?								
12	How much did you give in charity?								
13	How many Mantras you wrote?								
14	How long did you practise physical exercise?								
15	How many lies did you tell and with what self-punishment?								
16	How many times and how long of anger and with what self-punishment?								
17	How many hours you spent in useless company?								
18	How many times you failed in Brahmacharya?								
19	How long in study of religious books?								
20	How many times you failed in the control of evil habits and with what self-punishment?								
21	How long you concentrated on your Ishta Devata (Saguna or Nirguna Dhyana)?								
22	How many days did you observe fast and vigil?								
23	Were you regular in your meditation?								
24	What virtue are you developing?								
25	What evil quality are you trying to eradicate?								
26	Which Indriya is troubling you most?								
27	When did you go to bed?								

Name.....

Address .....

Signature.



## RESOLVES FOR QUICK SPIRITUAL PROGRESS

1. Maintain a Daily Spiritual Diary and at the end of every month send a copy of it to your spiritual guide who will give you further lessons for your progress.

2. Keep a daily Mantra-notebook and regularly write a page or two of your Ishta Mantra or Guru Mantra in ink.

3. Chalk out a routine for daily practice and stick to it at any cost. Distractions and obstacles are many. Be ever careful and vigilant.

4. Make a few resolves for practice during the New Year, as shown below.

5. Do not abruptly change your nature or mode of living. Do it gradually.

6. If you fail in any of the resolves through lack of self-control, unknowingly or by force of circumstances you should perform some Malas of Japa or give up one meal to remind yourself of the resolve and to impress upon the mind the importance of these resolves (self-punishment).

7. The resolve form should be prepared in duplicate and one copy duly signed and sent to your Guru so that you may not be tempted to relax your efforts, or ignore the resolves, or break any resolve under the slightest pretext or lame excuse.

## MY RESOLVES FOR THE YEAR.....

1. I will perform Asanas, Pranayamas for.....minutes daily.

2. I will take milk and fruits only in lieu of night meals once a week|fortnight|month.

3. I will observe a fast on Ekadasi days or once a month.

4. I will give up.....(one of my cherished objects of enjoyment) once every.....days|months or for ..... days|months.

5. I will not indulge in any of the following more than once every..... days|months or for.....months:

Smoking, Cards, Cinemas, and Novels.

6. I will observe Mouna (complete silence) for ..... minutes|hours daily and.....minutes|hours on Sundays|holidays and utilise the time in concentration, meditation, Japa, introspection.

7. I will observe Brahmacharya (celibacy) for .....weeks|months at a time.

8. I will not utter angry, harsh or vulgar words to anyone during this year.

9. I will speak truth at all cost during this year.

10. I will not entertain hatred or evil thoughts towards anyone.

11. I will give away .....paisas per rupee of my income in charity.

12. I will perform selfless service (Nishkamya Karma Yoga) for ..... hours daily|weekly.

13. I will do .....Malas of Japa daily (Mala of 108 beads).

14. I will write my Ishta Mantra|Guru Mantra in a notebook daily for..... minutes or.....pages.

15. I will study.....Slokas of Gita daily with meaning.

16. I will maintain a Daily Spiritual Diary and send a copy of it every month to my Gururji for getting further lessons.

17. I will get up at.....a.m. daily and spend.....hours in Japa, concentration, meditation, prayers, etc.

18. I will conduct Sankirtan with family-members and friends daily for.....

Signature .....

## UNIVERSAL PRAYER

O Adorable Lord of Mercy and Love!  
Salutations and prostrations unto Thee.  
Thou art Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Omniscient.  
Thou art Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute.  
Thou art the Indweller of all beings.

Grant us an understanding heart,  
Equal vision, balanced mind,  
Faith, devotion and wisdom.  
Grant us inner spiritual strength  
To resist temptations and to control the mind.  
Free us from egoism, lust, greed, hatred, anger  
and jealousy.  
Fill our hearts with divine virtues.

Let us behold Thee in all these names and forms.  
Let us serve Thee in all these names and forms.  
Let us ever remember Thee.  
Let us ever sing Thy glories.  
Let Thy Name be ever on our lips.  
Let us abide in Thee for ever and ever.

—Swami Sivananda











